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THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,769 SATURDAY 14 NOVEMBER 1998 (IR80p) 70p

Saddam's last-ditch plea to West

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

AS THE United States and Britain stood on the brink of unleashing air-strikes against Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator claimed last night he was not trying to create a crisis but was pressing his case for an end to sanctions.

Simultaneously in Washington, President Bill Clinton seemed to offer the tiniest of grace periods for Baghdad, saying that air-strikes could yet be avoided if Iraq allowed the United Nations weapons inspectors to complete their work. "Saddam still has it within his hands to end this crisis now," Mr Clinton declared.

In his first public comments since the latest dispute erupted at the start of this month, President Saddam said he would "accept positively" any initiative that met "these just and balanced demands".

The remarks, relayed by the Iraqi News Agency after a meeting with the Russian ambassador to Baghdad, are unlikely to assuage the West, but are a first acknowledgement that a devastating attack is imminent unless he complies with the conditions of the UN.

However, the thrust of the language of Western leaders was as stern as ever, as a force of some 200 combat aircraft and cruise-missile carrying warships was poised in the Gulf, awaiting only the final order to attack. Other reinforcements, including B-52 and B-1 bombers and a second aircraft-carrier group, are on their way.

Mr Clinton said Iraq was still trying to have sanctions removed without surrendering its weapons of mass destruction, and this was unacceptable. "None of us can tolerate an Iraq free to develop these weapons with impunity."

The attacks could start at any time. Britain and the US have made clear there will be no ultimatums, still less any protracted bargaining over the terms of a resumption of UN inspections – of which President Saddam's remarks last night could be seen as the forerunner. Both London and Washington are adamant: the Iraqi dictator has a simple choice – either full compliance or face the consequences.

Some analysts believe strikes will begin in the next 36 hours, perhaps earlier, but other signals pointed to a few days' delay. A White House spokesman said last night that President Clinton still planned to leave for a week-long trip to Asia today, adding that Washington wanted a peaceful resolution.

A trip to the region next week by the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, was still on last night, but could be called off at any moment. The aim of Mr Cook's trip is to gauge whether Egypt and Saudi Arabia – both of whom have warned President Saddam that the crisis is entirely of his own making – could make him change his mind. If hostilities had already started, the visit would be pointless.

"The Iraqis need no further warning," the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, said, while paying lip service to the notion that a diplomatic solution was still possible. In London, George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, said President Saddam had only "a very short period of time" left in which to comply.

If not, the "inevitable" air-strikes would be aimed at crippling Iraq's military infrastructure, and doing by force what the UN inspectors could not achieve peaceably. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, warned President Saddam that he should not doubt "the total seriousness of our purpose".

Unlike the previous crisis in February, Iraq stands virtually isolated. Even the Russians, President Saddam's ally on the Security Council at that time, could offer no solace. Russia still opposes the use of force, but with London and Washington insisting they have all the authorisation they need for military action, and no prospect of another mission to Baghdad by Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, such objections are now academic. The crisis was "getting beyond political control", the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, said, making clear that Moscow was powerless to influence events.

The majority of Arab governments hold President Saddam responsible for the current crisis; France – as exasperated as Britain and the US with his reneging – is resigned to the use of military force; and only Iran has come out unequivocally in sympathy with Iraq.

At Friday prayers in Baghdad, however, the mood was intransigent. As queues grew at petrol stations and prices of key commodities began to rise in the capital's markets, preachers warned that the country would fight to the end, vowing that even America's might would be insufficient to overcome a united people.

One urged the world's Arabs and Muslims to declare war on America and its allies, saying: "Do not be claws in the hands of Jews and Americans."

Meanwhile the 50-odd United Nations staff remaining in Baghdad have moved out of their hotels into the UN headquarters building, which offers better protection in the event of air attack. The State Department has warned American citizens around the world against possible terrorist attacks arising from the crisis.

A Muslim woman raising her hands during Friday prayers at Gelany mosque in Baghdad, where Muslim leaders yesterday heaped curses on the United States *Reuters*

Lib Dem rebels plot to thwart Labour pact

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR and Paddy Ashdown's groundbreaking "Lib-Lab" deal faced a severe challenge last night as rebel Liberal Democrats launched a national campaign to wreck the agreement.

A coalition of the party's MPs, peers and councillors vowed to overturn the controversial deal for closer co-operation signed by the two leaders this week.

The new group, called the Campaign For Liberal Democracy, has set up a national network of supporters furious that the pact was agreed without any consultation.

The leaders claimed that their hand had been forced by the revelation in yesterday's *Independent* that Labour had set up a "dirty tricks unit" to target the Liberal Democrats at local level. The rebels said that the move by Millbank officials proved that Labour had a twin-track strategy to "co-opt and kill off" the party with a view to eventual takeover.

Simon Hughes, Liberal Democrat MP for Southwark North and Bermondsey and the party's health spokesman, is understood to be backing the campaign. He said last night: "The news of a renewed attempt by Labour to have a go at Liberal Democrats on the ground is an expected part of political warfare.

"The issue it raises is whether the strategy of increasing national agreement is either appropriate or acceptable without both parties, by democratic decision, being signed up to delivering it.

"My concern is that the party was forced into making a decision that may not have been taken if there had been a proper democratic process."

Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown stunned both their parties on Wednesday when they revealed the plan to widen the scope of a joint cabinet committee to include areas such as health, welfare reform and Europe.

Opposition to the new deal was also growing last night among Labour MPs and, crucially, large unions normally supportive of Mr Blair. It is understood that the AEEU's leader, Ken Jackson, was "spitting blood" when he heard of the agreement.

However, the severest test for the co-operation pledge will come from the Liberal Democrat rebel campaign, which will use the Internet, local party meetings and forthcoming national conferences to capitalise on grass-roots opposition.

The campaign's first act will be to try to block the deal at the party's Federal Executive meeting on Monday, when it will call for Mr Ashdown to pull out of the committee.

Council leaders from Liverpool, Sheffield and London, where the fight against Labour is the most bitter, will challenge the plan at the Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors' conference in Birmingham later this month. The party's student arm, Liberal Democrat Youth and Students, has also called on Mr Ashdown to justify the move at its annual conference next week.

A party spokesman yesterday denied that the new deal had in any way compromised the Liberal Democrats' ability to oppose the Government or Labour councils.

Nine die as troops fire on students in Jakarta

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Jakarta

AT LEAST nine people were killed, one hundred were injured, and parts of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, were in a state of anarchy yesterday as troops fired automatic weapons on unarmed democracy demonstrators.

Last last night a truce appeared to have been agreed between student leaders and élite combat troops of the Indonesian army who fought a series of battles against unarmed demonstrators, firing rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons.

At least three students from the Catholic Atma Jaya University were killed in the afternoon after soldiers broke up a march on the national parliament building by firing rubber bullets at short range.

There were later reports that at least six other people had been killed during subsequent battles. Throughout last night ambulances carried injured people into the city's hospitals.

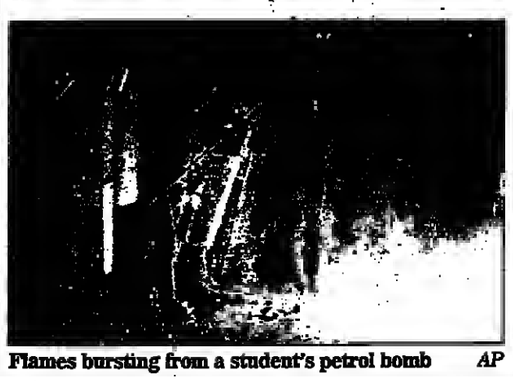
After dark, student demonstrators and locals from nearby slums, counter-attacked with petrol bombs and stones.

Late last night a truce appeared to have been agreed. Speaking in a television interview, the Muslim opposition leader, Amien Rais said: "The situation is chaotic. It looks as if we were having a civil war."

The demonstrators were protesting about a meeting of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). Indonesia's upper house of parliament, which concluded a four-day meeting yesterday intended to bring democracy to the country after the resignation in May of the former dictator, President Suharto.

In a series of decrees, the MPR agreed that Suharto should be investigated for corruption, that the army's role in politics should be reduced, and that elections should be held by the end of next June.

But the students had been demanding his prompt trial and an immediate elimination of the military's guaranteed parliamentary seats.



Flames bursting from a student's petrol bomb *AP*

INSIDE THIS SECTION

INSIDE THE REVIEW

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IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

By the time I leave this country, I may be the only **openly heterosexual** man left in the place

Jackie Mason's diary

Plus: Why I love stern women

Real life

THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY'S BEST WRITERS: MICHELE ROBERTS, BLAKE MORRISON, DAVID THOMSON, MICHAEL BYWATER, JEREMY CLARKE, ANDREW DAVIES, WALLACE ARNOLD, JOAN SMITH, SIMON ANDREAE

Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, receiving an honorary degree from Coventry University yesterday at the city's cathedral in recognition of her efforts to bring peace to the province *David Jones*

Le Shuttle hit by Christmas strike action

MOTORISTS AND lorry drivers travelling to the Continent face a Christmas of chaos after the drivers of the Channel tunnel shuttle trains voted overwhelmingly yesterday for a series of one-day strikes.

Aslef, the train drivers' union, said its members voted by five-to-one to strike in a dispute over pay and conditions. It said 24-hour strikes would be held on 23 November and on 2, 9 and 15 December. All four strikes will start at one minute past midnight.

Union members voted by 58 to 11 to take action. Aslef is seeking to boost pay from the basic of £17,200 to about £24,000 through consolidation of payments and the working of extra hours at enhanced rates.

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

The strike was condemned by the freight industry and one member of the Road Haulage Association said it would make the task of crossing the Channel "harder than Private Ryan's".

Mick Rix, Aslef's general secretary, said: "We deeply regret the inconvenience which will be caused to the travelling public on strike days caused by the intransigence of Eurotunnel and their refusal to negotiate an acceptable pay award."

Aslef said a number of drivers had joined the union since the dispute started so that most of the 99 drivers of Le Shuttle trains were now members. The strike will not affect the Eurostar passenger trains from London to Paris and Brussels.

The Road Haulage Association condemned the strikes, saying its members would lose millions of pounds in business. Dan Hodges, a spokesman, said: "The mood among our members of exasperation bordering on desperation.

"It represents more significant and damaging losses. We cannot continue to have one of our major European gateways held to ransom in this way."

The Freight Transport Association said that about 2,000 trucks went across the Channel each day, of which about half used the tunnel. "This is a major inconvenience that the industry could most certainly do without, especially at what is now an extremely busy time of the year," said a spokesman.

"We hope they can come to some form of settlement with the employers."

Eurotunnel, the Anglo-French company that owns the tunnel and operates the shuttle trains, does not recognise Aslef but negotiates with staff through a company council, set up five years ago. A Eurotunnel spokeswoman said pay negotiations were continuing with the council.

A spokesman at the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions said the dispute was a matter for Eurotunnel.

■ Tube travellers face disruption because of a likely strike by signalling workers in a dispute over alleged intimidation by management, a union warned yesterday.

The 30 workers, who operate signals on London Underground's Northern Line, have voted to take industrial action after complaining they were being intimidated and pressured, mainly by one manager.

Talks aimed at resolving the row broke down last night and the Rail, Maritime and Transport union warned that a strike looked "inevitable".

"The only way this dispute can be resolved is by removing incompetent, bullying management," said Bob Crow, the union's assistant general secretary.

According to the union, 12 of the 30 signalling workers, who are based at Euston, have asked the Underground's stress counselling unit for help this year.

The union's executive will meet next week to decide on strikes.

Man held in hunt for Bristol killer

A MAN aged 21 was arrested and questioned yesterday in connection with the murder of Jennifer King, who was strangled after leaving a nightclub in Bristol.

Miss King's partially clothed body was found in dense undergrowth near her home in Warmley on the outskirts of Bristol on 3 November – three days after she went missing from the club.

Avon and Somerset police said that the suspect, who was arrested at his home in Warmley, was "helping with inquiries". His car and his mother's vehicle were removed by police forensic science teams. The family and boyfriend of Miss King, 22, a receptionist, have been informed about the development.

News of the arrest came as detectives were preparing for a second weekend of activity centred on the Chasers Nightclub in the Bristol suburb of Kingswood.

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

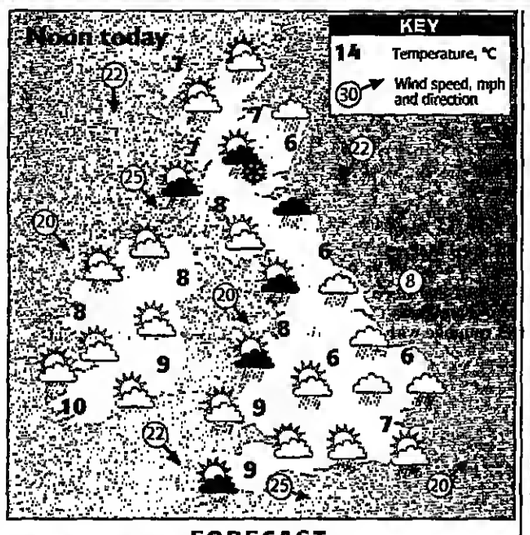
Jennifer left the club at 2.30am on 31 October, apparently to walk alone to her home 20 minutes away.

Her battered body was found three days later by police searchers in a woodland "den" near her home.

The police found two distinctive house keys in the copse where the body was found.

They believe the keys may have been dropped by her killer. Earlier this week they launched a special operation in the Warmley area to attempt to fit the keys to a lock.

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation Eastern and south-eastern England will be generally cloudy with outbreaks of showery rain. Wales and western and central-southern England will be brighter, but still with some showers in most areas. However, most of these showers will be over north-west facing coasts and hills and the best sunshine will be found to the lee of high ground. Scotland will start mostly cloudy with patchy rain, but brighter, breezier weather with sunshine and showers will spread from the north; the showers will fall as snow over the mountains.

London, SE & Cent S England, E Anglia, Midlands: Cool with showery rain at times. Becoming drier and brighter later. A variable wind veering north-west and freshening later. Max temps 6-8C (43-46F).

SW England, Wales: A cool day with sunshine and showers; these becoming more isolated later. A freshening north-west wind. Max temps 7-10C (45-50F).

Channel Is: Breezy with sunshine and showers. A fresh to strong north-west wind. Max temp 10C (50F).

Cent N & NE England: Generally cloudy and cool with some showery rain at times. A light and variable wind. Max temps 5-7C (41-45F).

NW England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man, N Ireland: Cool with showers, but becoming brighter with better sunny spells later. A freshening north-west wind. Max temps 7-10C (45-50F).

SW & SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen: Cloudy with patchy rain gradually clearing. Becoming brighter later with sunshine and showers, the showers wintry over the hills. A freshening north-east wind. Max temps 5-8C (41-46F).

NW Scotland, W & N Isles, NE Scotland: Early patchy rain will clear leaving sunshine and showers, the showers will fall as sleet and snow over the hills. A freshening north-east wind. Max temps 5-8C (41-46F).

OUTLOOK

It will become colder everywhere on Sunday with wintry showers over northern Scotland. However, the rest of the UK will be largely dry with sunny spells. Monday will see patchy rain threatening the extreme west, but elsewhere it will remain dry with sunny spells after overnight frosts.

TRAVEL

London: A41 Finchley Rd. From Swiss Cottage to Fortune Green. Major works at Finchley Rd Gyratory. Until 31st December.
Berkshire: M4 between J8/9 (Maidenhead) and J7 (Slough). New road layout with a 50mph speed limit during flood relief work. Until 30th November.
Kent: M20 Between J9 Ashford (West) and J8 Maidstone. Resurfacing both ways with contraflow. Two lanes will still be available each way at all times. Until 21st November.
Cambridgeshire A1 between Alconbury and Haddon. Construction, lane closures and contraflow. Until 31st December.
Buckinghamshire: M40 between junctions 1a (M25) & 3 (Wycombe East). Three narrow lanes both ways and a 50 mph speed limit in force. Until 1st January 1999.
Bristol: M5 J18-18. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 1st January 2001.
Norfolk: A47 Hardwick Roundabout, Kings Lynn (A10). Roadworks between the pullover roundabout and the Hardwick Roundabout. Until 13th December 1998.
AA Roadwatch: Call **0336 401777** for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

Belfast	4.24pm	to	7.53am
Birmingham	4.16pm	to	7.29am
Bristol	4.23pm	to	7.28am
Glasgow	4.12pm	to	7.52am
London	4.13pm	to	7.18am
Manchester	4.14pm	to	7.34am
Newcastle	4.05pm	to	7.38am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	3.27	10.5	3.56	11.0
Cork	1.57	5.8	2.24	3.9
Devonport	2.12	4.5	2.32	4.7
Dover	7.36	5.7	8.18	5.7
Dun Laoghaire	8.34	3.6	8.45	3.8
Falmouth	1.43	4.3	2.03	4.5
Greenock	9.28	3.1	9.18	3.2
Harwich	8.08	3.4	8.48	3.6
Holyhead	7.21	4.7	7.33	5.0
Hull (Albert Dk)	2.38	7.3	3.29	7.5
Kings Lynn	2.43	5.4	3.36	5.5
Leith	11.28	4.8	11.51	4.9
Liverpool	7.54	7.9	8.16	8.2
Milford Haven	2.42	5.5	3.07	5.8
Newquay	1.41	5.6	2.05	5.9
Portland	3.26	1.5	3.26	1.6
Portsmouth	8.18	4.2	8.39	4.0
Purfleet	4.49	3.7	5.13	3.9
Scarborough	12.30	5.0	1.16	5.0
Wick	8.09	3.0	8.19	3.1

Height measured in metres

AIR QUALITY
Today's readings

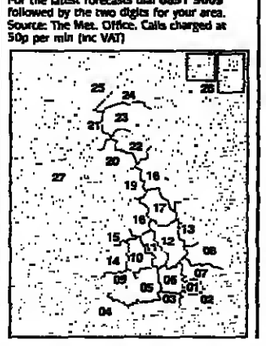
	NO_2	SO_2
London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 07.16
Sun sets: 16.13
Moon rises: 02.00
Moon sets: 14.48
New moon: Nov 19

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts dial **0891 5009** followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT)



YESTERDAY

EXTREMES

Warmest: Isles of Scilly 10C (50F)
Coldest (day): Aviemore 4C (39F)
Wettest: St Andrews 0.95 ins
Sunniest: Isle of Man 7.8 hrs

For 24hrs to 2pm Friday

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max °C	Max °F
Aberdeen	0	0.09	9	48
Anglesey	0	0.13	10	50
Aviemore	0.1	0.01	9	48
Belfast	0.3	0.48	10	50
Birmingham	0.3	0.15	10	50
Bournemouth	1.9	0.14	11	52
Bristol	0.7	0.48	11	52
Buxton	0.1	0.49	8	46
Cardiff	0.3	0.59	11	52
Clacton	0	0.02	-	-
Cromer	1.2	0.03	8	46
Edinburgh	1.0	0.01	9	48
Exmouth	2.0	0.92	11	52
Fishguard	0.1	0.19	9	48
Folkestone	-	-	-	-
Glasgow	0	0.10	10	50
Hastings	4.9	0.12	13	55
Hove	2.9	0.07	12	54
Isle-of-man	0	0.53	11	52
Isle-of-wight	2.6	0.21	11	52
Jersey	3.7	0.17	12	54
Kendal	0	0.71	10	50
Leeds	0.4	0.19	9	48
Lerwick	2.6	0	8	46
Littlehampton	2.3	0.14	11	52
London	2.0	0.11	11	52
Lowestoft	0.4	0.04	9	48
Manchester	0.1	0.17	11	52
Margate	-	-	-	-
Morecambe	0	0.68	10	50
Newcastle	0.1	0.02	9	48
Newquay	4.6	0.61	12	54
Norwich	0.6	0.05	9	48
Oxford	1.6	0.22	10	50
Ross-on-wye	1.0	0.08	11	52
Salcombe	-	-	-	-
Scarborough	0	0.01	7	45
Shrewsbury	0.3	0.07	10	50
Southend	3.5	0.12	11	52
Southport	-	0.37	10	50
Stornoway	0.5	0	9	48
Swanage	1.8	0.14	11	52
Tenby	3.9	0.78	11	52
Torquay	3.7	0.04	12	54
Weston-s-mare	-	-	-	-
Weymouth	0	0.26	11	52

24 hours to 6pm (GMT) Thursday: Information by PA WeatherCentre

COME RAIN OR SHINE...

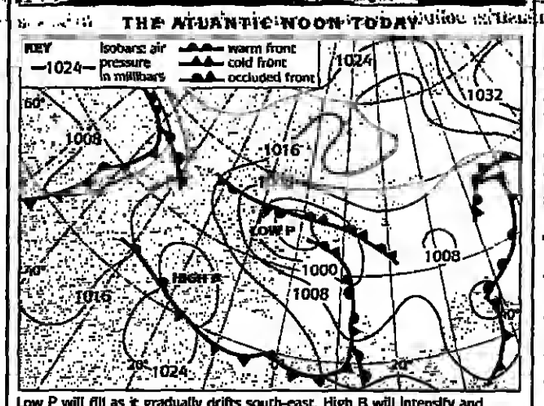
A GOVERNMENT helpline has been set up to advise pensioners on their entitlement to new winter fuel payments, it was announced yesterday.

The poorest pensioners on income support will receive £50 by the end of November. Others will get £20 in January. The winter fuel payments helpline is on 0645 151 515, and is manned from 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, until March 1999.

THE WORLD

EUROPE NOON TODAY

THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



Low P will fill as it gradually drifts south-east. High B will intensify and transfer northwards.

THE WORLD YESTERDAY

c,cloudy; d,drizzle; f,fair; fg,fog; h,hail; ha,hazy; m,mist; r,rain; s,sunny; sh,showers; sl,sleet; sn,snow; ss,sandstorm; th,thunder. Most recent available figure, noon local time.

		°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F			°C	°F
Adelaide	f	17	63	Chicago	c	7	45	La Paz	c	18	64	Prague	c	2	36
Algiers	c	22	72	Christchurch	f	15	59	Lagos	c	32	90	Quebec	c	5	41
Almaty	c	21	70	Cologne	c	8	46	Lima	c	20	68	Reykjavik	c	2	36
Amsterdam	c	9	48	Copenhagen	f	5	41	Lisbon	f	20	68	Rhodes	f	21	70
Anchorage	fg	-4	25	Corfu	c	16	61	Los Angeles	s	21	70	Rio de Jan	dr	19	66
Athens	r	9	48	Crete	c	22	72	Madrid	f	14	57	Riyadh	s	27	81
Atlanta	c	19	66	Dakar	s	33	91	Majorca	c	17	63	Rome	s	14	57
Atlanta	c	16	61	Dallas	c	12	54	Malaga	s	22	72	San Fran	c	12	54
Auckland	c	19	66	Darwin	c	31	88	Malta	sh	14	57	Santiago	s	26	79
Bahrain	s	29	84	Dubai	s	30	86	Manila	f	32	90	Seoul	m	17	63
Bangkok	f	29	84	Edmonton	c	2	36	Mecca	s	35	95	Seychelles	f	20	82
Barbados	f	30	86	Faro	c	18	64	Melbourne	dr	13	55	Shanghai	c	21	70
Barcelona	c	17	63	Florence	s	11	52	Mexico City	c	21	70	Singapore	c	32	90
Beirut	f	25	77	Frankfurt	c	7	45	Miami	f	28	82	St Pet'burg	m	-8	18
Belgrade	m	4	39	Funchal	c	22	72	Milan	s	12	54	Stockholm	sn	2	36
Berlin	m	1	34	Geneva	c	6	43	Minsk	f	30	86	Sydney	c	26	79
Bermuda	c	24	75	Gibraltar	s	21	70	Montreal	f	8	46	Taipei	f	27	81
Biarritz	r	12	54	Hanoi	s	26	79	Moscow	sn	-11	12	Tel Aviv	f	25	77
Bogota	c	19	66	Harare	c	26	79	Munich	r	4	39	Tenerife	f	24	75
Bombay	s	33	91	Helsinki	sn	-5	23	Nairobi	f	26	79	Tokyo	c	15	59
Bordeaux	r	10	50	Hong Kong	s	25	77	Naples	c	12	54	Toronto	c	10	50
Boston	f	11	52	Honolulu	f	29	84	Nassau	f	29	84	Tunis	f	19	66
Brisbane	sh	21	70	Istanbul	sh	16	61	New Delhi	s	25	77	Ulan Ude	c	-6	21
Brussels	r	7	45	Jakarta	c	33	91	New Orleans	c	18	64	Valencia	c	19	66
Bucharest	m	6	43	Jeddah	s	32	90	New York	c	11	52	Vancouver	r	9	48
Budapest	f	8	46	Jerusalem	s	23	73	Nice	f	15	59	Venice	s	11	52
Buenos Aires	f	27	81	Johannesburg	f	24	75	Nicosia	c	23	73	Vienna	m	2	36
Cairo	f	23	73	Karachi	s	32	90	Oslo	f	4	39	Warsaw	c	4	39
Calgary	c	5	41	Kathmandu	s	23	73	Paris	r	1	45	Washington	s	13	55
Cape Town	f	23	73	Kiev	c	-3	27	Peking	s	13	55	Wellington	f	14	57
Caracas	f	30	86	Kingston	s	31	88	Perth	r	18	64	Zagreb	-	-	-
Casablanca	s	21	70	Kuala Lumpur	sh	31	88	Port Stanley	c	10	50	Zurich	c	7	45

Why hot air is stopping the world doing a deal on global warming

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY
in Buenos Aires

SUCH WAS the euphoria a year ago when the world community agreed at Kyoto on a specific plan to tackle global warming, that it appeared the hard part was over. The past week in Buenos Aires, where 4,000 officials and ministers have been meeting to try to take the treaty forward, has shown that it has only just begun.

Yes, there is a plan: the rich countries agreed that they would make big cuts, legally binding ones too, in their emissions of the industrial gases such as carbon dioxide from cars and power stations, which are causing the atmosphere to overheat. They fervently hoped that the poor nations would follow suit, in due course, naturally.

Simple enough? Not quite. America, the country whose emissions dwarf all others, (25 per cent of the world's total from 4 per cent of the world's population), exacted a very high price for its agreement in the last frenzied 24 hours of negotiating in the ancient Japanese city.

It sought and won three special ways by which countries (read: the US) could help to implement their emissions reductions.

Some think of these merely as loopholes in the Kyoto pact, and indeed they are, but they are officially referred to, in the eye-glazingly abstract jargon of the climate-change "police", as flexible mechanisms.

There are three: emissions trading, joint implementation and the clean development mechanism (CDM).

They all have this in common: they enable the US to buy purely notional, on-paper reductions in its CO2 emissions from other countries (carbon credits) without actually doing anything to effect that amount of cuts in reality at home.

With emissions trading, which will eventually be the most important one, the Americans will be able to buy up these theoretical "pollution surplus" owned by countries such as Russia and Ukraine, whose smokestack economies have collapsed in the 90s, leaving them with levels of CO2 emissions already way below the reduction targets that they were generously given at Kyoto. This pollution surplus is familiarly known as hot air.

With joint implementation, an industrialised country can receive credit for the emissions cuts secured by an energy-saving project it finances in another industrial country (a high-tech power station replacing a low-tech one, say, or the planting of a forest that soaks up CO2). Under the CDM, an industrialised nation can receive the carbon credit for financing such a project in a developing country.

Over the year since Kyoto, culminating this week in Buenos Aires, diplomats, civil servants and ministers from around the world have been striving to agree the operating rules for the flexible mechanisms, which the chief American negotiator, Stuart Eizenstat, referred to as the Kyoto treaty's plumbing and wiring.

They are more than mere technicalities. Without them, the Americans will not ratify the Kyoto pact, and the world will have no working plan to counter climate change in this hottest year of the millennium, which has seen record forest fires, record floods, and record storms, culminating in Hurricane Mitch, which tore the heart out of central America.

The reason for the Americans' insistence is the sheer awesome size of the greenhouse gas reduction target they agreed to, which, it is now accepted by all except the most entrenched green fundamentalists, they cannot possibly meet without on-paper reductions as well as real ones.

They agreed to cut back their emissions of CO2 and five other greenhouse gases to 7 per cent below their 1990 levels by 2010.

But this represents a cut from where the US economy will have grown to by the latter date of between 20 and 30 per cent – from about 7.2 billion tonnes of gases emitted annually to 5.4 billion tonnes.

Unless the spiritual home of the automobile suddenly transforms itself into a giant Holland – with every motorist swapping the car for a bike, and replacing air conditioning and central heating with seasonally adjusted clothing – this is not deliverable, certainly by domestic action alone.

Robert Reinstein, the former US diplomat who negotiated the original climate change treaty in 1992 (to which the Kyoto pact is a protocol), told journalists in Buenos Aires this week he did not think it deliverable in any circumstances, even if the US buys up all the hot air and carbon credits available in the world.

The target was simply too big, he said, and in the end the Kyoto treaty will fail and the international negotiating process will be discredited.

The White House of Bill Clinton and Al Gore (the real driver of US climate change policy) vehemently disagrees, but they do need their flexible mechanisma and their emissions credits. The problem is, how much should they be allowed?

Surely they should not attempt to meet their entire target by buying up hot air, with no real energy efficiency action at home? The rest of the world, with Europe in the lead, does not think so, and wants a concrete ceiling on America's buying credits, insisting it must be "supplemental" to action taken at home.

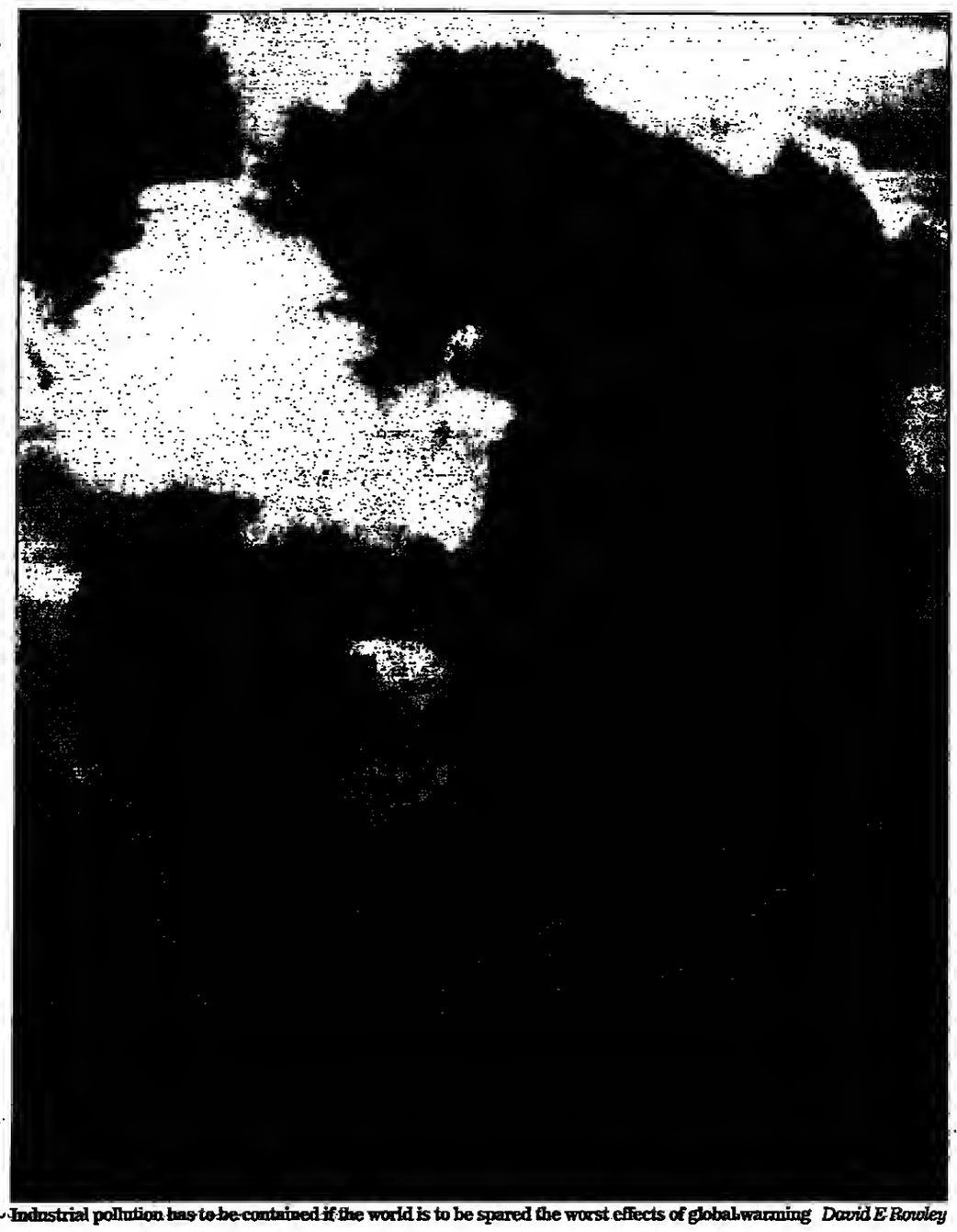
The Americans insist they will make real cuts, but they are strongly opposed to a formal ceiling.

This issue – stand by for some great jargon – is called "supplementarity", and it looks likely to be a big sticking point this week at Buenos Aires.

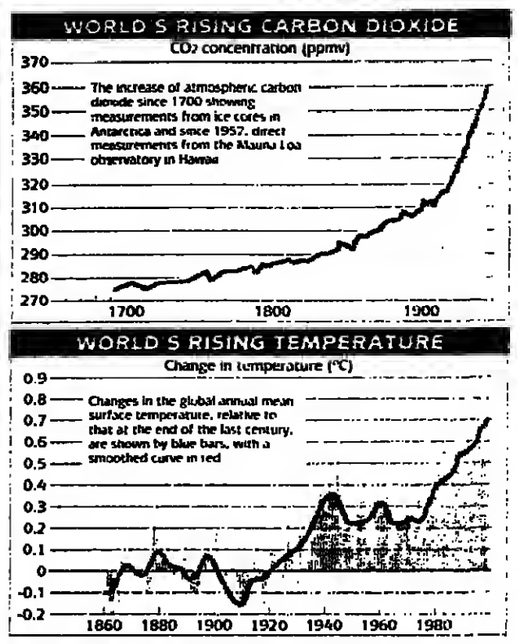
But phoney emissions reductions are not the only thing America needs to make the Kyoto treaty work. To get it ratified by the US Senate they need something that seems even further off at the moment: active involvement by the Third World.

There are no greenhouse gas reduction targets yet for China, India and the rest of the developing nations, even though the Chinese will eventually overtake the US as the world's biggest single CO2 emitters, and the developing countries with their soaring populations will become the largest greenhouse gas source.

They want their own deal.



Industrial pollution has to be contained if the world is to be spared the worst effects of global warming *David E Rowley*



And the deal they want is for their emissions to be calculated not on a gross basis, but on a per capita one. When China overtakes the US, its emissions per person will still be only a quarter that of each American.

But that deal is still a long way off, and in the meantime the US Senate, some of whose members think the climate treaty is merely a plot to harm American competitiveness, has formally resolved that it will not ratify Kyoto until there is "meaningful participation" by developing countries.

So at Buenos Aires all this week, the Americans – led by the thin-lipped, cerebral and formidable Mr Eizenstat – have been actively courting developing nations to declare their own, purely voluntary targets for reducing their greenhouse gases.

They had a big success when their host, the Argentine President Carlos Menem, declared his country would set one next year. Argentina's lead was followed by Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic with some potentially juicy hot air to sell.

The Americans were jubilant – here was something to show the Senate – but the Chinese and the Indians were angry, feeling their position was being undermined, and forced the issue off the conference agenda where the Argentines had attempted to place it. Here was yet another sticking point.

Then negotiators saw there was a way to start bridging the gap between the American need to buy carbon credits and the developing countries' sense of being badly done to: the Clean Development Mechanism.

If an American electricity company builds a clean-coal power station in India with a dollop of US government money, under the CDM everybody is happy: the Indians have got a better power station; the Americans have got a big fat emissions credit; and the world has got less CO2 being put into the atmosphere.

Prompted by the European Union, with Britain's Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, to the fore, the developing countries started to see that the CDM was as much a new sort of clean-energy aid programme as a First World wheeze for buying up carbon emissions, and their enthusiasm for it was kindled.

It is likely to go ahead on a fast track now, even before its rules and the rules of the other flexible mechanisms are formally agreed. These have been put off, with other difficult issues such as supplementarity, to later conferences, although a formal work plan with tight deadlines has been put forward.

The Third World is slowly coming on board. The Americans are slowly seeing their necessary conditions fulfilled. By such complex, jargon-filled procedures does the world's effort to contain global warming go forward.

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

Schizophrenic released, then killed partner

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

A MOTHER-OF-FOUR was stabbed to death by a schizophrenic who had been allowed to live alone and take responsibility for his own medication, despite having a history of violence.

An independent inquiry yesterday severely criticised a south London health authority for its "inadequate" care of Michael Folkes, who called himself "Luke Warm Luke". He killed Susan Crawford in October 1994, eight hours after a doctor had put him on a list for emergency attention.

An independent inquiry said Mr Folkes was oot stopped from leaving the Maudsley hospital after he turned up in a distressed state on 3 October. The following day Ms Crawford's body was found at his London flat, beaten with a fire extinguisher and stabbed 70 times.

The inquiry, which took four years and cost £750,000, strongly criticised care of Mr Folkes, saying he should have been readmitted to a mental health unit earlier because of the "signs of dangerousness" he was exhibiting. In January 1993 he had carried out an attack of "striking similarity".

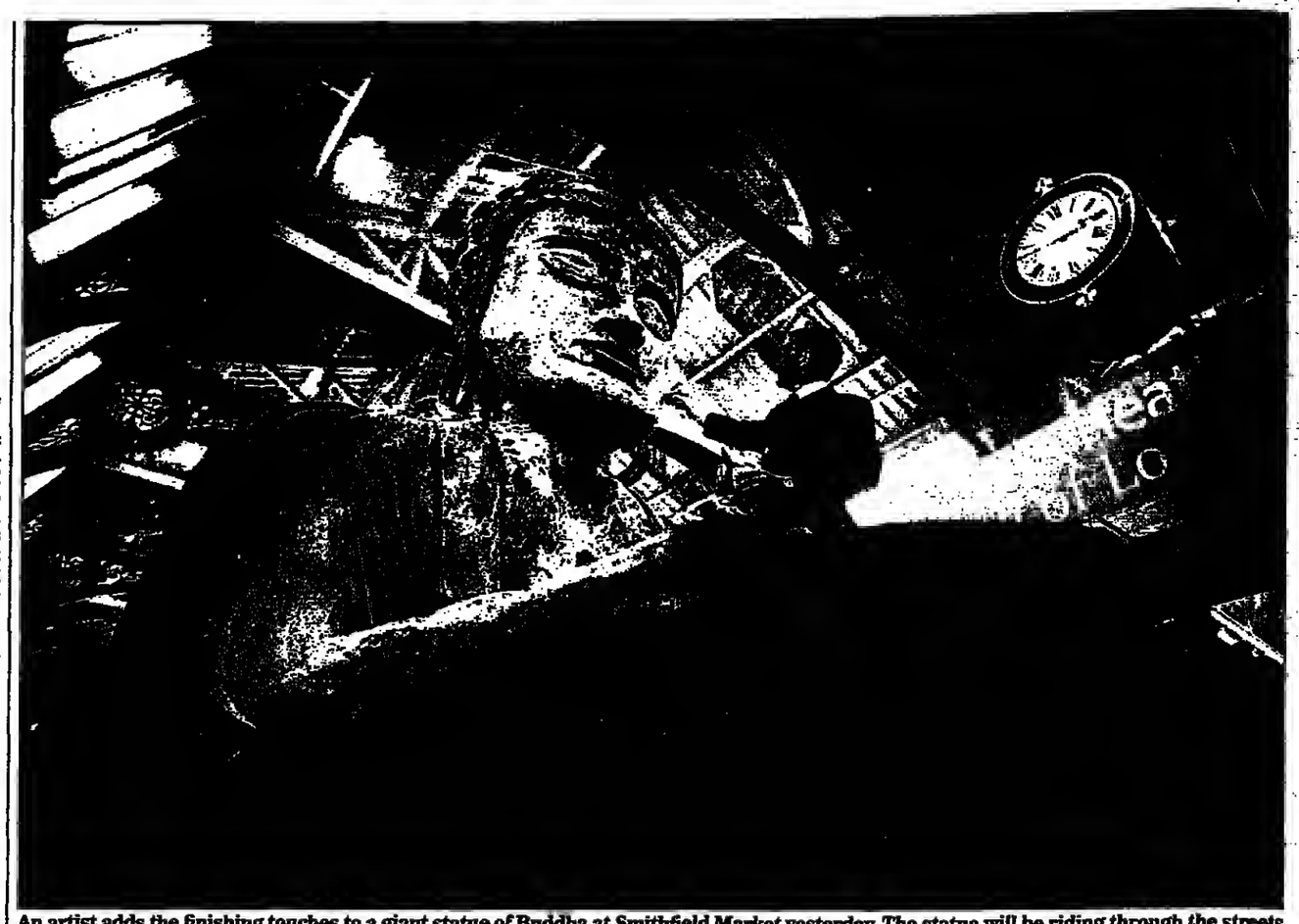
Breakdowns between agencies, insufficient safeguards in his treatment and the administration of his drugs led to the tragedy. Mr Folkes's forensic psychiatrist, Dr James McKeith, allowed his patient to stop taking injections of an anti-psychotic drug, but take them in pill form, despite recurring aggressive episodes and failure to take medication. The inquiry also criticised the fact that Mr Folkes was allowed to live in a flat by himself.

The report called for appropriate housing for mentally disordered people to be a priority and improvements to be made to support services for people in the community.

Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Health Authorityadmitted that "more could and should have been done to try to prevent this tragedy". Martin Roberts, the health authority's chief executive, said: "We want to make sure ... that everything that can be done is done to reduce the risk of such an event ever happening again."

Mr Folkes was first admitted to care in 1986 and had a history of assault. He was described as "extremely dangerous".

Susan Crawford's daughter said it was "disgusting" that health chiefs had taken so long to apologise. Michelle Crawford, 22, was 17 when her mother was killed and now looks after her sibling twins, aged 15, and her six-year-old brother, as well as her own three children. "They should have apologised to my family way before," she said.



An artist adds the finishing touches to a giant statue of Buddha at Smithfield Market yesterday. The statue will be riding through the streets of the City of London today on one of the floats in the annual Lord Mayor's Show *Tom Pilston*

Hague aunt wins lottery jackpot

Marjorie Longdin celebrates her £856,000 win *PA*

BY DAVID LISTER

WILLIAM HAGUE'S auntie has won the lottery. And the sheep on the Yorkshire moors have hit the jackpot.

The announcement yesterday that the Conservative Party leader's aunt had scooped the £856,648 top prize in Wednesday's National Lottery was curious enough. Her choice of what to splash out on was even more curious – a prize ram.

Marjorie Longdin, 73, a farmer's widow from Tickhill, South Yorkshire, plans to buy the £20,000 Texel Scottish ram – which she described as "the champagne of sheep" – for the family's 300-acre farm. When the ram begins to feel at home she will then book a cruise.

She said yesterday: "I always said that if I won the lottery I'd holiday oo the Norwegian coastal cruise every year for life. Now I can book my ticket."

Mrs Longdin, who attended Mr Hague's wedding in Westminster last year, said she did not realise she had scooped a share of the jackpot until she checked her numbers in the paper on Thursday.

"I thought, 'Tve got three numbers, I've got four', then I thought, 'Oh my God, I've got the lot'. I just went all shaky."

She telephoned her sister Stella, Mr Hague's mother. "Almost the first thing I did was to ring William's mother and say, 'You'll never believe it, I've won the lottery. Will you let William know because I don't want to put a foot wrong?'

"He rang me this morning and said, 'Auntie Marjorie, I'm so delighted for you. When's the party going to be?"

In fact the party is this weekend and the Opposition leader will not be able to attend as he will be at another party — the Prince of Wales's 50th.

Newly conscious that "it could be you", or at the very least "it could be your auntie", Mr Hague is now determined to play the lottery every week.

Mrs Longdin expanded on what else she might spend her winnings on. "I realised I could now travel business class on an aeroplane, first class on a train, have a manicure every week and go to the chiropodist every fortnight." And then the otherwise careful Mrs Longdin made a political reference, though not one to which her nephew would object. "It's nice to know that my family is safe for life, especially when we're going into a recession," she said.

She was one of four winners to share the £3.4m jackpot and her numbers were made up of her date of birth and the year she got married. Mr Hague said he was delighted by his aunt's success, but did not expect to see any of the money. "I'll keep on earning my crust," he said.

However, while it was a happy day for the Hague family, as far as William is concerned the news will be broken around the world in a rather ambivalent manner. Reuters began its report: "Something has finally gone right for Conservative Party leader William Hague..."

Plea for Sioux shirt

BY DEBORAH ANDERSON

A HEARTFELT plea was made yesterday in Glasgow by descendants of Sioux warriors, killed at the Battle of Wounded Knee in 1890, for the return of a shirt believed to have been taken from one of the bodies.

Marcella Le Beau, secretary of the Wounded Knee Survivors' Association, argued their case at a civic hearing where she said the shirt, on display in Glasgow's Kelvingrove art gallery, should be brought home to allow people to grieve.

Mrs Le Beau, from South Dakota, who was dressed in a black suit and wore an Indian necklace, was surrounded by artefacts from all over the world when she spoke at the hearing in the city's famed Burrell Collection museum.

She spoke of the emotional and spiritual value of the shirt, known as a "ghost shirt", which her ancestors believed would protect them in battle.

The soul of Britain measured in 35mm

NOTEBOOK

IAN JACK

A COUPLE of weekends ago I made a mistake and took our children, aged five and six, to see *Doctor Dolittle* at the National Film Theatre on the South Bank.

It was the wrong *Doctor Dolittle*. Not Rex Harrison but Eddie Murphy – a new version of the story, set in California, street-smart and utterly charmless. Hey, yo get yo ass ovah heah, Ah'm gonna kick you in the the butt, and so on. We walked out after 15 minutes (our girl began to cry when a talking dog had a thermometer shoved up his ass), and went to the cinema shop to buy a compensatory video. *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* seemed about right, so I picked that up and then noticed a trilogy of documentaries by Humphrey Jennings on the next shelf, three short wartime films made for the Crown Film Unit and collected on one tape by the Imperial War Museum.

In what may have been an anti-American spasm – God rot the global conquest of their popular culture and particularly Eddie Murphy – I bought that too and settled down later that night to watch Britain as it once was; stoic, noble and in black and white.

Jennings had a short career as a film-maker – he died in 1950, aged 43 – but during the Second World War he made a series of brief, poetic films about Britain that are as fine as anything the British cinema has produced. They were distributed by the Ministry of Information to keep spirits up, and the marvel about them is that, contrary to the bombastic patriotism of the First World War, their original intention can still affect you.

We tend to think of the official British cinema of that time in terms of Harry Enfield's stiff and lordly Mr Cholmondley-Warner. Some of Jennings' films have their Cholmondley-Warner moments – a field of waving wheat to the tune of *Rule Britannia* – but mainly they let pictures of everyday Britain do the work. Hitler is never mentioned. As David Thomson writes in his *Biographical Dictionary of Film*: "They are war films without an enemy."

I thought of Humphrey Jennings again this week when Tony Blair and Gordon Brown launched via a series of speeches and interviews what the Chancellor called "the battle for Britain". The threat this time isn't Germany and Hitler but Scotland and Alex Salmond, and the possibility that early in the new century Scotland will be a separate state.

Many things point in this direction: opinion polls north of the border; ripples of English nationalism south of it, the fashionable orthodoxy that Britain was an imperial construction which will inevitably break down into its constituent parts, that "Britishness" has no meaning.

For some time now the Government, rich as it is in Scottish ministers, has not known quite what to do; a Scottish member of the Cabinet told me he bardly dared to mention the word "Britain" in Scotland because focus groups told him to steer clear of it.

Now, with a few months to go before the first election of a Scottish Parliament, Brown and Blair are at last staking out "the case for Britain"; what both England and Scotland stand to lose. A lot of it is eminently rational – a shared economy and history, a far greater mixing of populations than blood-and-soil patriots like to allow, political influence in the world – but rationalism often loses the argument against nationalism, which has the vision thing.

So what is the vision for the British nation, if it can still be called that? Gordon Brown proposed the shared values of "openness, internationalism, public service, fair play, social justice, social cohesion, democracy, tolerance, and enterprise". Fine thoughts, but all abstractions and just as easily poachable by a separate Scotland or England (or Dagestan).

Film-makers have the luxury and power of the concrete. In *Listen to Britain*, made in 1942, Jennings shows us nothing but an apparently random series of scenes and sounds. It's probably his best film. A Cholmondley-Warner character (Leonard Brockington, KC) introduces the film and thereafter there is no commentary. In 19 minutes, we see:

– Spitfires (the sound of aero engines)

– a farmhouse at dusk (the sound of the BBC pips)

– dancers at the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool (the band plays *Roll Out the Barrel*)

– miners with lamps (railway wagons clinking)

– a railway signal clanking to the stop position

– a simmering locomotive coming to a halt

– Scottish-Canadian troops inside a railway carriage (singing *Home on the Range*)

– an aircraft factory (the sound of lathes)

– Big Ben (and the chimes of)

– radio masts ("This is London calling ...")

– the countryside at dawn (birds sing)

– some spectacularly smoky factory town (dray-horses clopping)

– Workers' Playtime (Flanagan and Allen)

– Myra Hess playing at a lunchtime concert in the National Gallery (Mozart).

The cuts are quick and clever. In one brilliant sequence, introduced by the sound of a school piano, the camera shows children dancing and clapping in a playground, then a woman clearing teacups from a breakfast table, then the same woman watching the children from her window. A child's far-away voice ("Mummy!") briefly punctures the sound-track and the woman glances at something in the room. We see a framed photo of a kilted soldier. In a few seconds, Jennings has established absent fatherhood, sweet childhood, gentle domesticity: the fighter and the worth fighting for. The implication throughout the film is that the Britain depicted – so everyday, so ordinary – is also the Britain under threat.

It would be fair to say of Jennings that he had a strong streak of industrial romanticism. He loved machines, cooling towers and smoke, perhaps because he grew up so far away from them in Walberswick, Suffolk, where his father restored country houses and founded the Walberswick Peasant Pottery.

Jennings went from there to Cambridge and into stage design. He didn't see northern, industrial England and its workers until he was 32, and it is odd now to think that the mines and factories which seemed so thrilling and important to him have proved a less permanent way of living than his father's (peasant potteries, though not mines, being two a penny).

It would also be fair to say of him that he mistook Britain for a Greater England, which is the source of some of the present difficulties. We have come a long way since then, shedding industry and empire; there is no great manufacturing class stretching from Greenock to South Wales, and Rolls-Royce cars are German, despite the Spitfires. But I think it is hard to watch *Listen to Britain* and not take from it the idea that there was and is something called British culture. The documentary movement, of which Jennings was an important part, was a joint English, Scottish (and Welsh) enterprise. A Scot, John Grierson, gave Jennings his first film work. Britishness rather than mere Englishness flourishes inside the BBC and the media at large. The mood of hope and need for social change in Jennings' films eventually gave us the NHS. Certainly England and Scotland each have their own social and cultural differences, but isn't the political manifestation of them (to quote Michael Ignatieff, quoting Freud) "the narcissism of the small difference"?

Listen to Britain was made in a different time for different circumstances. I don't imagine for a minute that it contains practical lessons for Brown and Blair in their attempt to resurrect the virtues and benefits of a British identity. Save, perhaps, for one: that they may need some cunning, concrete poetry.

Humphrey Jennings directing a scene from 'Silent Village' for the Crown Film Unit in 1943 — *Crown Film Unit*

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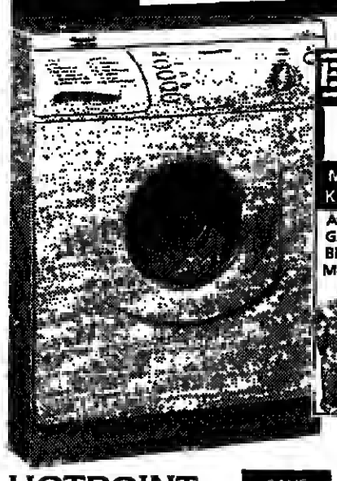

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Youth believes in pot and profits

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Editor

THEY VOTE New Labour, but hate politics. They respect the police, yet loathe the Nanny State. They love risk-taking, but want happy marriages and children. Oh, and they want Ecstasy banned. Welcome to the crazy, mixed-up world of the Millennial Generation.

A survey published today claims that British 16 to 21-year-olds are more classless, meritocratic and self-reliant than any other age group.

The study, carried out by Mori and the Adam Smith Institute, claims that the youth of today are vigorously opposed to bans on guns, smoking and explicit sex and violence on TV.

However, as many of them have experienced parental break-up and divorce, they retain a traditional belief in family and authority that harks back to the 1950s.

Describing the Millennial Generation as the successors to Generation X, the group of late twenty and thirtysomethings depicted in the novel by Douglas Coupland, the report's authors claim that teenagers are more tolerant than ever before. There is hardly anything the group says it would ban, including government restrictions on beef on the bone, tobacco advertising and cannabis.

The only things the Millennial Generation say they would outlaw are Ecstasy and fox-hunting with hounds. More than 40 per cent say they have been offered drugs but refused them. The youngsters claim to be more classless than ever before, believing that background and good connections are less important than personal drive and a solid education.

One third of the Millennial Generation will go through university or other higher education, the highest ever proportion, and believe they will earn more than any of their predecessors.

When they do graduate, most say they want to own their own business or become entrepreneurs. More than 43 per cent list "becoming a millionaire by the age of 35" as a career goal.

Whereas in the 1970s, local government or the Civil Service was the most popular career choice, just 1 per cent of today's youngsters say they even contemplated such a move.

Yet unlike Generation X, they say they are not interested in jobs in the media, advertising or PR and prefer instead the attractions of commerce and law. The top career choice is to own their own business, with 48 per cent putting it as their favoured option and as many girls as boys backing the idea.

"The Millennial Generation appear to have moved close to the kinds of aspirations thought to typify their American counterparts, rather than towards an attitude more representative of the European approach," says the report. The social aspirations of the group are thoroughly traditional, with 59 per cent saying they would like to own their own home and 46 per cent wanting children.

One statistic that might cheer the Government after its recent launch of a Green Paper on family life is that the biggest single goal of most of those polled was "to be happily married with a family".

Ministers may also be boosted by the fact that a huge 61 per cent of 16 to 21-year-olds support New Labour, with the Tories way behind on just 17 per cent, only just ahead of the Liberal Democrats on 14 per cent.

Yet 71 per cent believe that voting will "make no difference" to their lives and most believe that it is up to individuals not governments to find jobs and housing.

Only on pensions and education does the group favour the state's involvement over the private sector. A large majority of youngsters have no respect for MPs.

They claim to have most respect for doctors, teachers and policemen, with teachers scoring a 46 per cent rating, half as high again as similar surveys 12 years ago. Journalists come bottom, with just 2 per cent.

"The picture painted is of a generation which differs in many respects from its predecessors. They do not expect too much from the political process and accord little or no respect to its practitioners," the report concludes. "The Millennial Generation seem to be self-confident and self-dependent. They aim high and do not think themselves limited by background."

■ The survey questioned 848 people face to face at 53 sampling points across Britain in September. Voting and other demographic data was taken from a 1997 survey of 5,374 respondents and combined with the latest research.

PORTRAIT OF A GENERATION

WHAT THEY LIKE	WHAT THEY HATE
Cannabis	Ecstasy
Owning their own business	Bans on handguns,
Happy marriage and children	Tobacco ads
Cigarette smoking	Politicians
New Labour	Journalists
Self-reliance	Trade union leaders
Policemen	Jobs in the media or civil service
E-mail	Censorship of sex and violence on TV and films
Pagers	Privilege and class

The Millennium generation love to party, but they are not afraid of family responsibilities either

'Dirty Dozen' paedophile gets 12 years

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A PAEDOPHILE who was a member of the same gang as the notorious child killer Sidney Cooke was jailed for 12 years yesterday for abusing boys as young as 10.

Brian Turner, 60, who was nicknamed the Chicken Master for his ability to lure vulnerable youngsters, assaulted children for more than a decade, Snaresbrook Crown Court in east London was told.

He met one of his victims through his links with a child-sex gang that had infiltrated a breakaway scouting organisation. Police believe the ring is one of the largest paedophile networks ever uncovered in Britain. Its members may have abused up to 300 youngsters over the past 30 years.

Turner was also part of the child-sex gang that included Cooke and others convicted of the 1985 killing of Jason Swift. Police believe he introduced Jason to Cooke months before the teenager died.

Snaresbrook Crown Court was told how Turner meticulously "groomed" three of his four most recent victims.

Posing as a "grandfather figure" to lull youngsters and their parents into a false sense of security, he ingratiated himself by taking the children for meals and trips to the cinema and zoo. Later, he turned to violence, beating one boy repeatedly with a stick and partially smothering another with a pillow or towel.

The court was told that on occasions the child abuser would have paedophile friends round to take part in sex sessions which sometimes involved more than one boy.

Turner, whose child molesting offences stretch back 31 years, showed no emotion as Judge David Radford told him: "You are a dangerous paedophile who preys on adolescent boys to satisfy your sexual perversions. You present still, in my judgment, even at the age of 60, a serious risk."

The court was told that another paedophile, Keith Spratt, had helped Turner to assault one of the boys. Spratt, 49, a scoutmaster with the UK Baden-Powell Scout Association, will be sentenced next month. The judge said a fourth victim, aged 13, had been introduced to Turner by another paedophile, Douglas Braithwaite, who was also a scoutmaster.

Turner, of Enfield, Middlesex, who pleaded guilty to a 10 charges – seven of indecent assault, two of conspiracy to commit indecency and one of attempted buggery – was the third paedophile linked to the gang to be jailed so far.

■ A predatory paedophile who "declared war on society's standards of decency for its young people" was jailed for life at the Old Bailey yesterday for a series of sex attacks on boys. Michael Griss, 48, of Dagenham, Essex, admitted indecent assaults and buggeries involving five boys between 1979 and 1997. All were under 16.

IN BRIEF

Police reopen Manx murder files

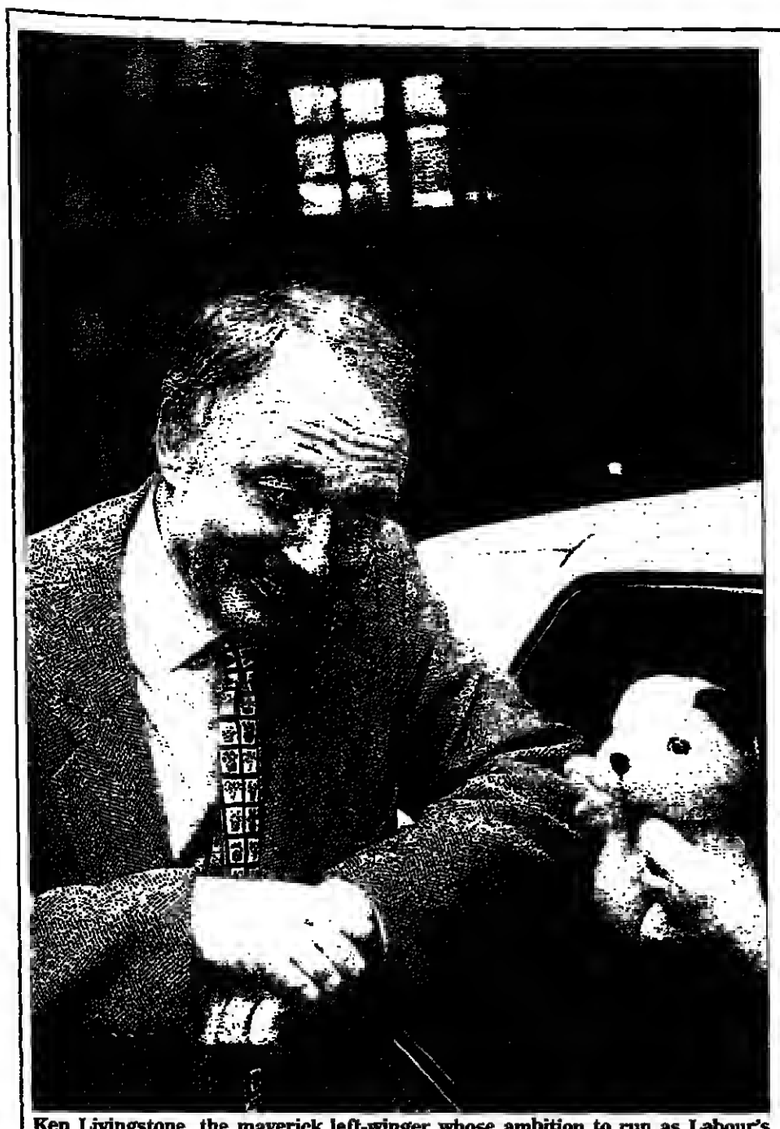
MURDER SQUAD detectives searching moorland on the Isle of Man for a shallow grave, believed to be that of a murder victim, have reopened files on three missing men from the area, police confirmed yesterday. It is understood the inquiry includes nine possible killings on the island and in Blackpool, Lancashire. Detectives are working with officers in Lancashire who are reopening files on fatal house fires in the Blackpool area.

Cheese seizure declared illegal

THE GOVERNMENT'S first emergency control order, which consigned seven tons of gourmet cheese to the bin, was yesterday declared unlawful in the High Court. James Aldridge, 59, of East Side Cheese in Godstone, Surrey, is to sue the Department of Health because his entire stock was impounded after a single case of *E.coli* poisoning.

Graduates sign on as secretaries

MORE THAN one in ten graduates end up working as secretaries or clerks, according to a survey by university careers officers. Clerical and secretarial jobs were taken up by 12.9 per cent of students six months after graduation. Overall, 65 per cent found a job six months after graduation, while 6.9 per cent were unemployed.



Ken Livingstone, the maverick left-winger whose ambition to run as Labour's candidate for London mayor is threatening to upset the Millbank apple-cart

Blair alters noble principle to read: one man, one veto

THE WEEK IN PARLIAMENT

MICHAEL BROWN

WHEN PADDY Ashdown gave his speech to his party conference, he asked a question of his new friend, Tony Blair: was the Prime Minister a control freak or a democrat?

This week saw the Prime Minister give his reply. Omov (one man, one vote), the great cause of the Labour right in recent years, was simplified down to one man, one veto.

In London, the Prime Minister dispatched his henchmen to block Ken Livingstone from running for London's mayor. Meanwhile, in Wales, the gloves came off as an exasperated Alun Michael failed to persuade Rhodri Morgan from standing down as candidate for the post of First Minister. Mr Michael and his cohorts are plumbing new depths in political chicanery by making the leadership campaign last indefinitely to burn off and arm-twist supporters of Mr Morgan.

Rather than making capital out of these Stalinist tendencies, William Hague seems to be catching the disease. In a fit of pique he phoned up Michael Portillo to slap him down for writing an article which forgot to mention Mr Hague's great leadership (an easy thing to forget). This will backfire. Mr Portillo has no official role in the Tory party and will make Mr Hague regret these attempts to limit his freedom to speak and write as he thinks fit.

WHILE PADDY Ashdown wallows in his glory as Tony's newest crony, the speculation mounted, in the corridors, as to what crumbs would drop from the cabinet table on to the Liberal Democrat mat. A tangible prize of patronage is being sought to placate their uneasy backbenchers. Certainly Alan Beith, the deputy leader who celebrates 25 years in Parliament this week, looked increasingly cheerful as his name was touted as the next Speaker.

Reaction in the Commons to the deal was scathing, however. Dennis Skinner was less than fraternal, reminding MPs that the last pact, in the 1970s, ended in tears when the Liberals ran away because "they couldn't stand the heat". Tony Benn wanted to know whether MPs could table questions to Paddy Ashdown, since the Liberal Democrat leader had more access to Downing Street than Labour backbenchers.

FRANK DOBSON'S office prides itself on its computer literacy, but the Millennium bug seemed to strike early in his department this week. First, a draft letter was sent to every Labour MP telling them to welcome the extra money he was giving to their local hospitals to reduce waiting lists. Trouble was, Mr Dobson was also sent the letter, telling him to fill out his name and congratulate himself on his fine decision.

Later, robotic electronic government left Mr Dobson speechless for over an hour. He was unable to make an emergency statement in the Commons on CJD because his department'a computers had crashed.

As he became increasingly frantic, Margaret Beckett stepped into the breach with her weekly business statement. A harassed government whip, Graham Allen, had to make Labour MPs ask questions to Mrs Beckett to delay proceedings until a hot and bothered Mr Dobson finally arrived.

Mr Dobson apologised and said the computer failure meant his statement could not be typed up. Perhaps they should keep an old-fashioned manual typewriter, or even a pen.

HOOLIGAN OF the week was the new Tory MP for South Holland and the Deepings, John Hayes, who lived up to the reputation he established at university – "You could have counted the people on campus more unpopular than myself on the fingers of a thalidomide's hand," he once said tastelessly.

Mr Hayes was so unruly during Prime Minister's Questions that he was threatened with expulsion from the Commons if he repeats it. Betty Boothroyd cautioned him with the worst tongue-lashing I've seen during her time as Speaker. It was splendid stuff.

A chastened Mr Hayes was already riding for a fall having tried, by innuendo, to embarrass Peter Mandelson in the wake of Nick Brown's "outing". Mr Mandelson was replying to a debate on factory closures when Mr Hayes interjected: "Would not the Right Honourable gentleman do better to emulate the Minister of Agriculture, who addressed the House in a mood of contrition and humility?"

He is the most recent in a line of Tories who have tried clumsily and unsuccessfully to cash in on Mr Mandelson's press difficulties. Chris Chope, for instance, had urged Mr Mandelson to study the pink paper – referring, of course, to the *Financial Times*, not the gay newspaper. And they wonder why they're not taken seriously as an opposition party.

IN MY new capacity as a Westminster elector I slipped in to the local Tories' public meeting entitled "Listening to Britain" held in a draughty church hall. And what a shambles it was.

A restless gathering of 80 members of the public (average age 65) waited for over half an hour before we were introduced to the crossbench peer Lord Marsh, the master of ceremonies. The chief listener, local MP Peter Brooke, arrived three-quarters of an hour late.

He didn't miss much, however. The first speaker was against automation and complained that modernisation would mean unemployment for paid domestic helps. Other Tories in the audience addressed the traditional issues: immigrants (too many); welfare state (too many scroungers); the homeless (it's their own fault); capital punishment (bring it back), etc.

It only hotted up when one speaker suggested there were too many BMWs outside the council blocks and that rents should be doubled. This provoked fury among the non-Tories in the audience. Those who weren't Conservatives were even less inclined to vote Tory by the end. One told me afterwards: "What a load of hull. When's Brooke retiring?"

Davies to be candidate for Welsh cabinet

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE FORMER minister Ron Davies is expected to announce that he still intends to stand as a candidate for the new Welsh Assembly next May.

In his first public engagement for more than 11 days, the Labour MP was due to tell local party members at a meeting last night that their strong support had persuaded him to fight on.

Mr Davies' supporters said yesterday that he was also likely to offer his constituency party in Caerphilly his own explanation of the incident on Clapham Common last month, which led him to quit the Cabinet. Addressing his local party for the first time since his resignation, he will try to correct media coverage of the "error of judgement" that led him to pick up a man before being robbed.

The new Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Michael, hinted this week that he would be prepared to include Mr Davies in his cabinet to run the assembly.

One of his colleagues said yesterday that he was determined to stand and play an influential role. "Ron has been immensely heartened by the response locally and wants to stand," he said. However, the Caerphilly constituency chairman, Derek Lamb, said that Mr Davies would be constrained in his answers by a pending court case connected to the episode.

Ron Davies: expected to stand for Welsh Assembly

A 38-year-old man is currently remanded in custody charged with robbing Mr Davies of his car and mobile phone.

Mr Lamb said that he expected most of the 60 members of the constituency's general management committee to attend the private meeting.

"Certain people I'm sure will ask questions but Ron has got to be very careful what he says. As far as he's able to answer he will and if he can't he will give the reason why."

Mr Davies had been due to address last Friday's weekly meeting but withdrew because "he was not in the best of health", Mr Lamb said.

He added that the constituency party had already expressed "absolute support" for Mr Davies but the MP wanted to meet members face to face.

Last week the media pressure on Mr Davies had become "intolerable", Mr Lamb said, but he spoke to him on the phone yesterday and he seemed "much stronger".

Mr Davies' only public appearance since his resignatioo as Secretary of State for Wales was to make a brief statement in the Commons, in which he attacked the press and appealed for a more tolerant society.

His resignation as prospective leader of the Welsh Assembly has triggered a bitter succession battle between Alun Michael, who replaced him at the Welsh Office, and Rhodri Morgan, who was defeated by Mr Davies in a party ballot earlier this year.

Yesterday the Welsh Labour Party's taskforce failed to produce concrete proposals for the new selection contest, but will meet next Thursday to announce its decision.

Bruno Brookes, 37, joins Trendy Tories

BY GARY FINN

THE FORMER Radio 1 DJ Bruno Brookes has become the latest "Trendy Tory" recruited by William Hague to revitalise the Conservative Party.

Brookes, who was culled by the BBC to make way for the new generation of DJs, has been chosen as a key member of Hague's Creative Forum, the think-tank charged with rebranding the party for the millennium.

The forum, which will advise on everything from the party logo to its "new millennial brand image", meets for the first time next week. Other members include the fashion designer Katharine Hamnett and James Bethell, the man behind London's Ministry of Sound nightclub.

Tony Blair has made great political capital out of attracting celebrity support for his "Cool Britannia" message, and the recruitment of so-called "Trendy Tories" is further evidence that Mr Hague is not prepared to cede that ground.

Brookes: His company staff were not surprised

Brookes, 37, boasts of being a millionaire and runs a growing media company that syndicates his shows to local radio such as Aire FM. Colleagues at the Leeds-based station said the move came as no surprise since "everyone knows Bruno is a Trendy Tory".

Brookes himself was reticent yesterday after being "outed" as a Tory and redirected callers to Conservative Central Office.

Tories hope his combination of business sense and media savvy will pay dividends. But whether he will supply the fresh approach demanded by Central Office remains to be seen. Last year, Brookes appeared in a billboard advert for Aire FM that was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority as "offensive, sexist and gratuitous". The poster showed a cigar-toting Brookes framed by the stockinged legs of his wife, Debbie.

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THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

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Economy: Most retailers are cautiously optimistic about consumer spending as the Christmas trading period begins

THE ART SHOP

JAMES MUNNS, proprietor of a stationery, art materials and gifts store: "I'd say we're just plugging along, but we're slightly up on last year although I'm not sure why. As to whether there's a recession, business has been slow for the last 5 or 10 years. And if you ask me where I'll be in 5 years' time, I hope I'll still be in business."

THE CARD SHOP

KEITH HUNTER, proprietor of Bargain Cards – a greetings card business: "I used to run a remaindered book shop, – the abolition of the Net Price Agreement brought an end to that. Although that was a forced decision, we've never looked back since we started selling cards. Turnover is up and I see no evidence of recession."

THE GENERAL STORE

STEVE DAY, manager of Gravesend Woolworths: "This store is the biggest retailer of entertainment products in the town and as such has seen some very strong sales in CD-Roms, computer games, CDs and videos. Other key areas such as toys ... have also performed well ... we are looking forward to a successful [Christmas] sales period."

THE RESTAURANT

MARILYN HART, manager of the Pastapaolo restaurant: "As far as I am aware there is no economic downturn, although there do seem to be fewer people in town. Recently, we were getting about 40 into lunch, now it's 60 or 70. This is the first year of the business and we are growing despite peaks and troughs."

THE HAIRDRESSER

TONY CESTARO, proprietor of a ladies' and gents' hairdstylist: "If there is a recession on its way, manufacturing will be the first to be hit and retailing usually the last. It's the same with the recovery ... Most of the business people who come into my shop don't think there's much of a problem at the moment."

THE TOBACCONIST

PATRICIA NASH, proprietor of a confectionery, tobacco and greetings card store: "We are closing the shop. Turnover is about 10 per cent down on last year and we see no point in continuing. Perhaps ... it's because people are more choosy about what they want to spend [money] on. There's a lot of unemployment around."

THE BUTCHER

TREVOR PAYNE, co-proprietor of a butcher's shop: "We certainly don't see the same number of people in the town centre. People also seem to be frightened of spending their money. They are holding on to it ... We're about 10 per cent down on our normal level of business. I think it's a long-term economic problem."

THE FISHMONGER

DAVE THEZE, proprietor of a fishmongers: "We've been hit by tighter fish quotas and the high price of cod, which is our biggest seller and has gone up 30 or 40 per cent. My accountant told me halfway through the year that we were 10 per cent down. It's the worst I've experienced since I set up five years ago."

Still profit, not doom, on High Street

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

THE KENTISH town of Gravesend, which sits unobtrusively on the south side of the Thames, is not feeling as funereal as it sounds.

The cold wind which seems to start in Siberia and whips up the river from the east has so far failed to bring with it the economic ills of Russia, Asia – or those nearer to home.

Earlier this week the Office of National Statistics showed that unemployment had increased on two key measures for the first time in six years. The Bank of England, at the same time, gave an optimistic forecast that Britain should avoid slipping into recession. But many remain unconvinced.

Gravesend is as good a place as any to test the mood in the High Street. In every election since the war, Gravesend has chosen an MP belonging to the party that formed the government. It is regarded as something of a political bellwether and could equally perform the same job for the economy.

Over the past decade, unemployment in the Gravesham Borough area has almost exactly mirrored the national picture. In the southern part of the constituency there is a rural sprawl sprinkled with farms and farmers, but dominated by the middle classes, many of whom commute into London.

In Gravesend itself, in the northern part of the borough, there is a strong Asian contingent living alongside a traditional working class community and pockets of real deprivation.

The town's retailers have learnt to live with only minimal patronage by those who live in the rural villages, who have increasingly looked to the massive Lakeside shopping complex in Essex just across the river. A new threat on the horizon is the Bluewater development a few miles upriver, opening next year, which will provide a Kentish rival to Lakeside and could suck more business out of Gravesend.

As in many British towns, supermarkets such as Sainsbury and Safeway have fled to the outskirts, leaving the centre to more "downmarket" retailers.

Three years ago Gravesend began to look like a ghost town but it has since recovered. Like many urban areas it has learnt to provide a service for the less moneyed classes, for those without cars, for pensioners.

Perhaps this market change has helped it withstand the present economic chill.

Tony Cestaro, who has been in business in the town for 40 years, acts as a father confessor to businessmen in the area. As a barber he gets to hear most things.

"I've seen one or two recessions in my time and this does not have the feel of the kind of thing we've suffered in the past. If there is going to be a recession, it's not going to be as bad," he said.

Lessons have been learnt from the last severe economic downturn, which proved to be both deep and long. "The Government has learnt lessons, and so have the retailers, landlords and those who set the business rates. They aren't like they were in the Eighties. They are being more reasonable. We can now negotiate a sensible rent, for instance."

Perhaps manufacturers were suffering – and those who have to wait for debts to be repaid – but most retailers in Gravesend still seem to be keeping their heads above water.

An unpublished economic assessment by the borough council seems to agree with Mr Cestaro. Only 3 per cent of companies in Gravesend are forecasting that employment will fall in their business, compared with 27 per cent in 1996.

"In the light of speculation that the UK economy is going back into recession, these votes of confidence in the Gravesham economy are a good sign," the analysis says.

But not all in the Kentish town is lovely. Shops selling upmarket and "fancy" clothes have had a tough time. An emporium selling frilly knickers, for instance, has seen its clientele disappear over the river to Lakeside. "With Bluewater looming and my lease coming to an end, I thought it was time to call it a day," said the proprietor, Susan Atkins. "People just don't come into town anymore," she said.

Nearby Dave Theze, a fishmonger, and Trevor Payne, a butcher, are having similar experiences, although they are soldiering on.

Mike Kelly, manager of the St George's shopping centre in Gravesend, was sanguine: "I'm not going to say – recession, what recession? Some traders are having a tough time, but many others are doing well. St George's is fully occupied for the first time in three years. That must be a positive sign."

He conceded that "value traders" were performing better than those who insisted on high profit margins or who sold expensive white goods.

The new Bluewater development could be a plus because it would bring 6,000 extra wage earners into the area, he argued.

And Michael Savell, chief executive of the Gravesham Chamber of Commerce, said that while manufacturing and exporters might be feeling the pinch, it was unlikely to have a big impact on Gravesend: "Demand is still strong and there are buoyant times ahead."

Inflation now seems a thing of the past

HAMISH MCRAE

WILL DEFLATION – a period of falling prices, rather than rising ones – be the feature that defines the next global downturn?

In Britain and the United States there is still some evidence of inflation, though earlier this week the Bank of England cut not only its growth forecast but also its inflation one. But elsewhere, first in Japan, and also now in France and Germany, prices have started to fall, while in East Asia, where the global downturn started, prices are plunging.

Of course no one can predict the extent to which prices might fall in the early part of the next century, any more than they could have predicted the scale of the inflation of the 1970s and 1980s. But there are several reasons to believe that price stability, or even slowly falling prices, may become the norm.

First, the present expansion of the world economy has not generated serious inflation anywhere. Commodity prices have tended to decline, wage demands have been muted and the price of some products, such as computers, has fallen very quickly. Britain has shown more signs of inflation than most other developed countries, with headline inflation at more than 3 per cent. But even here inflation is only 2 per cent, if you allow for the effect on prices from higher taxes (on items such as petrol) and changes in interest rates, and 1.5 per cent under the European Union harmonised index. If there has been very little inflation at the top of the growth phase, expect it to disappear during the downswing.

Second, the world has (more or less) independent central banks, committed to price stability. Whether they should be allowed to operate beyond political control is open to debate, but the plain fact remains that this trend towards independence has swept the world. It will be further enhanced when the European Central Bank takes over European interest rates in January.

Third, these central banks are buttressed by powerful financial markets, which compel them to follow anti-inflationary policies. Central banks only control very short-term interest rates and if they cut rates too much, the markets are liable to increase long-term rates. When Alan Greenspan, head of the US Federal Reserve Bank, unexpectedly cut US short rates last month, bond yield rates rose.

Finally, new communications technologies are cutting the production cost of many new goods and services dramatically.

Wendy Cope heads field to be first female Poet Laureate

BY JOHN WALSH

WILL THE Court of St James's get its first female Poet Laureate? The dizzy prospect came closer this week when Wendy Cope was nominated by BBC listeners as the poet they would most like to see in the job.

Respondents to a Radio 4 poll put her ahead of her nearest rivals, Benjamin Zephaniah, Roger McGough and John Hegley. There has never been a woman Poet Laureate since the royal household created the position for John Dryden in 1668, although there is nothing in the rules to debar them.

"I don't think women are precluded from the laureateship," said Mark le Fanu of the Society of Authors, one of the bodies that will advise the prime minister about Ted Hughes's successor. "In fact I think Wendy's in with a strong chance because she shows you can be funny and accessible without any loss of quality."

The radio voters' choices reflect a preference for humorous and "performance" poetry, as well as for simplicity. Of the poets who had been discussed in the serious papers as candidates for the laureateship, Andrew Motion came 10th in the Front Row poll and James Fenton was unplaced. One other woman – Ursula Fanthorpe – featured in the top 10.

Wendy Cope is the choice of Radio 4 listeners

Cope, 53, comes from Erith, in Kent, and lives in Winchester with the poet and critic Lachlan McKinnon. After graduating from St Hilda's College, Oxford, she taught at a London primary school for 15 years before her debut collection, *Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis*, brought her instant fame in 1986.

The title poem was hardly more than an excuse for an attention-grabbing title, but the collection displayed all her sardonic wit, acidulous view of men, parodic skill and bittersweet melancholy.

Her second collection, *Serious Concerns* (1992), was full of big themes (love, death, parting, cricket) simply dealt with, often in nursery-rhyme metres, and smart urban jokes about drinking, cats and parking spaces. She also revealed a rare talent for writing about happiness, and a willingness to take on commissions – both of which would stand her in good stead for the laureate post, with its requirement that the holder should write commemorative verses for special Royal or national occasions.

Should Ms Cope not be appointed, the other women front-runners are:

■ Carol Ann Duffy, OBE, 43 – Scots-born feminist, tough, direct, funny, combative and witheringly satirical. Author of *Standing Female Nude*, *Selling Manhattan*, *The Other Country* and *Mean Time*.

■ Lavinia Greenlaw, 35 – uses science as a lens for inspecting the world and humanising our relationship with technology. Former poet in residence at the Science Museum.

■ Elizabeth Jennings, CBE, 72. Oxford-educated Lincolnshire Catholic mystic. Her Sixties work (*The Mind had Mountains*, 1966) was full of mental breakdown and recovery. Later works feature religious themes and reflections on suffering.

■ Jackie Kay, 37. Scottish performance poet famed for funny, ventriloquial monologues.

■ Ruth Padel, 52. Former Oxford classics don and nightclub singer. "The sexiest voice in British poetry" (*Independent on Sunday*). Winner of last year's National Poetry Competition with "Icicles Round a Tree in Dumfriesshire".

■ Jo Shapcott, 46. Arts administrator. Writes with wit and detachment about sexual politics, bodies, identity. New collection, *My Life Asleep*, is shortlisted for 1998 TS Eliot prize. Only poet to have won National Poetry Competition twice.

■ Fleur Adcock, 64. New Zealand-born Londoner. Bejeweled exoticism combined with conversational plainness. Edited anthology of 20th century women's poetry.

Peter Street, bard of batter, says: 'All life is there in the chippie' *Howard Barlow*

Poetry takes up residence all over

BY GLENDA COOPER

SHALL I compare thee to a battered cod? Or a locust? Or even the M&S new range of velour trousers? Bards are back with a vengeance. From chip shops to zoos to jails, there seems nowhere you can escape from declaiming versifiers.

Peter Street goes into fish and chip shops around Wigan. He said that chippies had always had a special place in his heart: "I had a spinal injury and lying there in the ward we all used to dream of fish and chips so that gave it a significance for me," he said. "The other reason was that the way I found out about the Munich air-crash was reading the newspaper in the chippie."

To critics who might sniff, he said there were valid reasons for the juxtaposition of sonnets and sausages: "All life is there in the chippy. There is a sense of closeness, of community about chip shop."

He has penned many an ode to the delights of cod and chips including one about Eve's big mistake: "She should have offered him chips but the chippy was shut/half day or something like" is Mr Street's explanation for the Fall of Man.

Threats put end to Ulster peace tie

BY MELISSA KITE

A FOOTBALL team from nationalist west Belfast pulled out of a cup match with the RUC because of intimidation, Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan claimed yesterday.

Donegal Celtic reversed an earlier decision to go ahead with tomorrow's game at a neutral venue in Newtownards, Co Down, after coming under pressure from Sinn Fein and other nationalist groups.

Mr Flanagan said he was saddened and disappointed by the decision. "I'm aware of how much the match means to the players. I know how much they wanted to fulfil this fixture."

He said it was hard to come to any other conclusion than that the players pulled out because of intimidation. In a lengthy statement, the club said it had come under "unbearable pressure" and the match had become a source of controversy and division.

"The decision obviously caused annoyance and upset to a great number of people, especially within our community and patrons. Regrettably therefore Donegal Celtic has come to the conclusion that the only sensible course of action is to withdraw from this proposed game against the RUC."

John Taylor, the Ulster Unionist deputy leader and an active football supporter, blamed Sinn Fein for the decision. He said: "This reversal has obviously happened because of the campaign by Gerry Adams and others to make sure this match did not take place and regrettably intimidation has won."

Jimmy Boyce, the president of the Irish Football Association said he was shocked and disappointed by the decision which was confirmed by the club yesterday. "I thought we were beginning to see a change in attitudes. Unfortunately not," Mr Boyce said.

Sinn Fein welcomed the club's decision and said an alternative should be found so they did not find themselves in the same situation again.

■ Troop levels in Northern Ireland are being cut by 400 because of the improvement in the security situation. The 16 Regiment Royal Artillery, based in Armagh is being returned to its base in Britain next week.

Worms hired to eat waste

BY GARY FINN

GARDENERS HAVE known the true value of worms for years but now they are to be employed by local authorities to help cut down on a multi-million pound waste bill.

In what is the first project of its kind in the country, a Yorkshire council is proposing to hire thousands of worms to eat their way through tonnes of industrial waste. In just under two weeks' time the first worms will be unleashed at the country's first council-run industrial wormery near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, where the new workers will be fed tonnes of cardboard packaging collected from factories, supermarkets and local businesses.

Local authorities in England and Wales dispose of 20 million tonnes of domestic waste a year, spending at least £140m.

The 12-month pilot study will be small at first, based at the Huddersfield Community and Heritage Farm where the packaging, shredded and used for animal bedding will be mixed with manure to form the worm equivalent of a gourmet meal from a Michelin-starred restaurant. The worms are expected to get through up to 120 tonnes in their first year.

Not only will the waste no longer use up dwindling landfill space, which from next year will cost councils £10 a tonne in taxes, but it will be transformed into one of the best nitrogen-free fertilisers available.

The council plans to use the fertiliser on municipal gardens, hanging baskets and flower beds and even has plans to market the by-product.

"Everyone seems to win," said the farm's horticultural supervisor, Mick Hinchliffe. "We love it, the worms love it, and we get rid of rubbish."

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BSkyB accused of digital dirty tricks

By Paul McCann
Media Editor

A TELEVISION war breaks out tomorrow when the new service ONdigital launches. It is being seen as a replay of the late-Eighties battle between Rupert Murdoch and the British commercial television establishment.

ONdigital is a terrestrial digital broadcaster offering up to 30 pay and free television channels through a set-top digital decoder from £7.99 a month. Its £10m advertising campaign between now and Christmas will emphasise how there is no need for a disb or cable to receive the service.

It is owned by a consortium led by Granada and Carlton and its target is Sky Digital, Rupert Murdoch's latest attempt to convert the Britisb to pay television beamed from the skies.

Already a war of words has broken out. Competing claims are being tested by advertising regulators, stories of inadequate equipment are being circulated to the City and journalists, and the echoes of Mr Murdoch'a victory over the long-defunct "squariel" and BSB even go so far as ONdigital using the same building in Battersea, south-west London, as BSB.

On Thursday, Granada, which was also one of the main backers of BSB, hinted that it thought a report circulating in the City – claiming ONdigital would cover less than 50 per cent of the country when it launches – was part of a Sky dirty tricks operation.

The same day the trade magazine *Media Week* reported that there are worries about whether ONdigital will have enough set-top boxes to meet demand before Christmas. Precisely the same reports circulated about wbether BSB had enough squariels in 1990. In the end it turned out to be true.

The other echo from eight years ago is the recourse to regulators. Last week ITV, whose main shareholders are Carlton and Granada, started running information films about digital television, featuring a satellite dish with a red line through it. BSkyB has complained to the Independent Television Commission about the films and the ITC is investigating.

BSB's 'squarial' proved an idea too far

Likewise, Sky has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority about ONdigital's poster advertising campaign. It is challenging the assertion that consumers will not need a new ariel to receive the ONdigital signal.

"This is exactly what we did in the Eighbes," says a journalist who once ran Sky's dirty tricks department. "It was a huge contest. We complained to the ASA and the IBA about BSB's supposed launch dates, its technology claims, its picture claims, everything.

"Then BSB put out a document titled 'Raising Cain' with a very malevolent picture of Rupert Murdoch on the front designed to frighten people. We responded by publishing something called 'Freedom in Broadcasting: For or Against?' "

Tales of pbone tapping and skulduggery also circulated at the time, but in fact the bugging did not start until BSB, beset by huge launch costs and low subscriptions, merged with Sky. Then bugs were used as the two rival teams of management tried to dispose of each other.

This time around Sky claims it is not interested in smear tacbcs: "It is a very different situation," says Tim Allan, the company's spokesman. "Then BSB and Sky had a very similar proposition. This time there is a very different method of delivery and very different services on offer. We are looking forward to ONdigital launching because now they have to deal with the consumer going into shops and making a choice."

On the record, ONdigital claims not to be interested in Sky and says it wants to widen the market, not poach subscribers. However, off the record its spin doctors are willing to claim that disinformation about its coverage is being created by a company that bas Sky as its biggest client. They will also whisper about the 30 per cent of homes in blocks of flats and listed buildings that have no access to satellite.

In the last such battle the dirty tricks mattered less than Mr Murdoch's ownership of newspapers that could be filled with support for Sky. And that is the same this time, too.

■ A second senior government adviser has joined a company partly owned by Mr Murdoch. Julian Eccles, special adviser to Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, is to become head of corporate communications for Open, the home shopping and banking television service in which BSkyB holds a 32.5 per cent stake.

Mr Allan, former press secretary to the Prime Minister, joined BSkyB in May.

Radio Rentals staff in High Street Kensington, London, prepare for the rush to buy digital decoders *Eyecatchers*

Boycott gets second media innings with Talk Radio


Geoff Boycott is in at Talk Radio and Kirsty Young has been shown the door

By Gary Finn

GEOFFREY BOYCOTT'S exile to the commentary wilderness for beating his former mistress lasted just three days. Talk Radio announced yesterday that it was hiring the disgraced former England batsman.

Boycott, handed a three-month suspended sentence and a fine by a French court on Tuesday, bas landed a lucrative contract with the station to cover England's Ashes tour of Australia after being welcomed back into the fold by Talk Radio's new owner, Kelvin Mackenzie.

At the same time, the station has dropped two presenters Tommy Boyd and Nick Abbott. Kirsty Young, the Channel 5 news anchor who has fronted Talk Radio's breakfast show, will not be returning to the station, according to one source.

Earlier this week Boycott's broadcasting career lay in ruins as television stations lined up to announce that he no longer featured in their cricket coverage because his conviction earlier this year for beating Margaret Moore had been upheld. His woes were compounded when *The Sun* dropped his cricket column and branded him a disgrace.

But Boycott, whose spin is being spun by Max Clifford, the publicist who brokered the deal, has found an ally in Mr Mackenzie, who lasl night condemned the French judge, Dominique Haumant-Duamas, and said: "French justice stinks".

Linking up with a convicted woman-beater may at first sight appear to be a distasteful error of judgement, but Mr Mackenzie, a former editor of *The Sun*, is simply following his gut instincts. His buy-out of Talk Radio is still less than a month old and Mr Mackenzie bas never seen anything wrong in the "all publicity is good publicity" adage.

He said: "Geoff Boycott'a an expert on cricket and our cricket coverage needed beefing up. Nobody else wanted him, so 'Come on down, Geoff!'

"Tbe decision in France stinks. My view ia that the judge should keep ber views to herself."

Boycott, who will receive a five-figure sum for the contract, hailed the deal as proof positive of his innocence. "I am so pleased about Talk Radio because il is nice to know that someone out there is backing me," he said.

Damning evidence of racism in uniform

BY KATHY MARKS

THE FINAL day of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry was told yesterday that shortcomings in the police disciplinary and complaints procedures enabled racist officers to remain in the service.

The public inquiry was sitting in Birmingham, the last stop on its tour of regional cities and the venue for the final day of five months of evidence.

The chairman, Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, and his three advisers will now enter a three-month period of purdah, aiming to hand their report to the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, by February.

The report, widely expected to herald a watershed in the policing of Britain's ethnic minority communities, will deliver a verdict on the abortive police investigation of Stephen's death as well as recommendations for the future handling of racially-motivated crime.

Yesterday Edward Crew, Chief Constable of West Midlands Police, said he had reservations about the much-discussed concept of "institutional racism".

"I am concerned that the term indicates that the police service is racist. That is manifestly not the case," Mr Crew said. "But I have to acknowledge that we recruit from a community that discriminates against its minority ethnic groups and, despite all our wishes, racism remains within our ranks."

One reason for that, he said, was the complaints and disciplinary procedure, which required a claim of misconduct against an officer to be proved beyond reasonable doubt. He said that the force welcomed impending changes to the regulations that would lower the standard of proof to the "balance of probabilities".

Yesterday's hearing began with a minute's silence in memory of Stephen and a short prayer by the Bishop of Stepney, the Rt Rev John Sentamu, one of Sir William's advisers.

If the first part of the inquiry – the unravelling of the Lawrence murder investigation – exposed a crisis of confidence in the Metropolitan Police, the second furnished compelling evidence that the grievances of London's minority communities are replicated around the country.

The regional meetings were a magnet for black and Asian people who grasped them as an opportunity to bear witness, to describe the indifference, harassment and brutality that they say represent their routine experience of the police.

They spoke on the periphery of the hearings, during lunchtimes and coffee breaks, in secluded corners of the hotel conference suites where the inquiry convened.

Some of their faces were already familiar, thanks to dogged campaigns waged in the public eye.

The Manchester meeting was attended by Mal Hussain, an Asian shopkeeper on a Lancaster housing estate who has endured seven years of racial barassment, including stonings and fire bombings.

In Greenford, west London, there was Kwesi Menson, brother of Michael Menson, the musician who died after being set alight in north London, and Sukhdev Reel, mother of Ricky Reel, the Asian student found drowned in the river Thames. They, like Mr Hussain, accuse the police of racism and apathy.

Janet Alder travelled to the Bradford meeting in the hope of highlighting the case of her brother, Christopher, who died in unexplained circumstances in Hull police station last April.

Bradford, like other cities visited by the public inquiry team over the past few weeks, was the backdrop for countless such harrowing tales.

For instance, when one Pakistani woman in the city telephoned the police to report that a bottle of urine had been tossed through her door, was told: "At least it wasn't petrol. You won't burn in your beds."

Two clear themes emerged. As Lee Jasper, chairman of the 1990 Trust, a leading black organisation, put it recently, ethnic minority citizens in Britain are "under-policed as victims of crime, over-policed when going about their law-abiding business".

That is the nub of the whole sorry matter. On the one hand, blacks and Asians say, police fail to investigate properly racially-motivated crime, whether it be the daily harassment that makes many families' lives a misery, or the brutal murders that shape the headlines. On the other hand, they say they suffer heavy-handed policing based on racist stereotypes.

Recent Home Office research found that black people are eight times more likely than whites to be stopped and searched, and five times more likely to be arrested. The inquiry also heard a wealth of anecdotal evidence about the chilling regularity with which members of ethnic minorities are treated as perpetrators when they summon police to protect them.

In Greenford, the Southall Monitoring Group, which collates such cases, spoke for a dozen men and women sitting in the audience.

Optan, for instance, a Somali woman who needed five days of hospital treatment in July after she was kicked and punched by a white neighbour while seven months pregnant. Police have yet to interview her alleged assailant.

And Miguel, a young Asian who was racially abused and assaulted by some white men at Gatwick Airport, where he was seeing off a friend. His friend called the police, who arrested, detained and charged Miguel. No one else was ever questioned.

The inquiry team, which held the regional meetings with the aim of taking the temperature of race relations outside London, has been left in no doubt as to the depth of cynicism and bostility with which police are viewed by the black and Asian population.

As Sir William Macpherson retires to consider his recommendations, he is aware that nothing less than radical reform will begin to restore public confidence.

He knows that it will take more than a bit of tinkering at the edges to deliver a police force that serves all communities equally.

Neville and Doreen Lawrence answering reporters' questions, in front of a poster of their son Stephen, after meeting Jack Straw in June 1997

A CATALOGUE OF ERRORS

24 March 1998
Edmund Lawson QC, counsel to the inquiry, opens the hearings. He describes the police inquiry as "seriously flawed". Michael Mansfield QC, representing the Lawrence family, says: "The magnitude of the failure in this case cannot be explained by mere incompetence ... So much was missed by so many that deeper causes and forces must be considered."

30 March
Neville Lawrence (father) says in statement that he was told that the suspects were seen washing blood off themselves on the night of the murder.

8 May
Michael Mansfield QC alleges there was a corrupt link between a police officer and Clifford Norris, a criminal, and father of one of the five suspects.

14 May
Suspects announce plan to seek leave to apply for judicial review of decision to call them to give evidence at the inquiry.

12 June
High Court grants suspects leave to apply for review.

15 June
Videotape at inquiry shows suspects brandishing knives and expressing violent racist views.

17 June
Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Met, apologises to the family for the incompetence of the investigation.

18 June
Lord Justice dismisses review application, but says suspects may not be asked whether they killed Stephen.

29 June
Suspects' appearance is marked by violent scenes as Nation of Islam activists attempt to enter building.

30 June
Suspects are pelted with bottles after evasive and implausible evidence and end up fighting in streets.

1 October
Sir Paul Condon repeatedly denies that there is institutional racism in his force. Apologising to the Lawrences in person, he says: "I deeply regret that we have not brought Stephen's racist murderers to justice and I would like to personally apologise again today to Mr and Mrs Lawrence for our failure."

13 November
The inquiry ends with a public hearing in Birmingham.

February 1999
Sir William Macpherson's report to be published.

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Kurdish guerrilla chief held in Rome

TURKEY'S MOST wanted man, the fugitive leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), has been arrested in Rome, Italian police said yesterday. A police spokesman said Abdullah Ocalan, who has been sought by Ankara for two decades, was detained at Rome's Fiumicino airport at around 10pm on Thursday, after flying in from Moscow on a false passport.

"He was arrested with the intention of him being extradited," the police spokesman said. A Russian foreign ministry spokesman declined to comment on the report that Ocalan flew from Moscow.

Mizgin Sen, European spokeswoman for the PKK's political wing, the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan (ERNK), said Ocalan had requested political asylum.

"He is here and he has asked for political asylum ... We are waiting for his application to move forward," she said.

"He decided to go to Italy to apply for political asylum."

BY JUDE WEBBER
in Rome

Ocalan gave himself up after being stopped at passport control, the police spokesman said. He is now being held at a prison the spokesman said, but declined to disclose its whereabouts. Media reports said Ocalan was being held at Rome's Celio military hospital.

"He is being held in a hospital. He has a slight health problem," the ERNK spokeswoman said. She had no details but said: "It's not too serious. This is what we have been told by Italian officials."

Ocalan, also known as "Apo", has spearheaded an armed campaign for Kurdish autonomy for the last 14 years, in which more than 29,000 people have been killed.

Ocalan, who is believed to be around 50, asked for political asylum in Russia earlier this month. On November 5, one-third of the Greek parliament renewed an invitation to Ocalan to visit Greece, calling him "the leader of the world's most oppressed people."

In October, Turkey threatened Syria with military force if it did not expel Ocalan, who Ankara said had taken refuge in the country.

Turkish authorities said Ocalan used bases in Syrian-controlled territory to launch attacks in southeastern Turkey.

The capture of the rebel leader will be seen in Ankara as a major coup against the PKK.

"Italy should extradite Ocalan back to Turkey," Turkish Interior Minister Hasan Denizkurdu told the Kanal D television channel.

The police spokesman in Rome said he had no details of extradition plans and that the matter was in the hands of Italy's justice ministry.

Ocalan is the main architect of armed Kurdish nationalism. He founded the PKK in 1974 as an extreme left faction that later earned a reputation for ruthlessness. – *Reuters*

Students try to lift a fallen colleague after troops opened fire on thousands of marchers in Jakarta yesterday *Kemal Jufri/AFP*

Death on campus as police open fire

IT WAS more than an hour since the ambulance had driven away, but nobody at the university knew what had happened to Wawan. When the soldiers lurched into action, he was out at the front of the Atma Jaya campus with the other students, and when they started firing into the air, he ran like the others into the shelter of the university.

"That's when I saw him fall," said a weeping young woman. "I thought: 'He's OK, they're only firing blanks, it's just the tear gas.'" But the soldiers were firing rubber-coated bullets and they fired one of them straight into Wawan's chest.

Even as his anxious friends were talking, in the chaos of the campus's main hall, the news filtered through – he had died during the journey to the hospital. He was 22.

Atma Jaya is a private Catholic university, one of Jakarta's smartest, but within the space of a few hours yesterday it became a battleground between two tragically mismatched armies.

On one side were the protesters – ordinary Jakartans as well as students, at least four of whom were dead by the end of the day. On the other were Indonesian soldiers whose brutality yesterday destroyed what little remained of their credibility. "There are two kinds of people in Indonesia now," shouted one man last night, over the reports from automatic rifles and tear gas guns. "Civilians and animals."

The afternoon had begun like the previous day, with huge processions of student protesters, who began at two different spots in Jakarta and marched towards the national parliament. There, new laws were being drafted by the People's Consultative Assembly, a body dominated by appointed representatives of the former president, General Suharto.

In May he was driven from power by demonstrating students and, since the assembly convened on Monday, the students have angrily denounced the half-hearted measures which it has debated.

All week, there have been fights between the demonstrators and the soldiers. On Wednesday, one policeman and one student were reported to have been killed, and the chief of the armed forces, General Wiranto, apologised for the excesses of his troops. Yesterday afternoon, as one group of marchers made their preparations, their leaders painted wooden signs bearing the words, "No violence."

When they began their journey there were 200 of them; an hour later they had been joined by thousands of ordinary Indonesians. Close to the parliament building, at Atma Jaya University, the students spilled on to the street which runs through Jakarta's business district. The day before, the soldiers had been content to form a line and block the march. At 3.30pm yesterday, supported by water cannon and armoured cars, they charged.

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Jakarta

The mass of the crowd fled down the street, and hundreds of others took shelter in the university. If the aim had simply been to restore order and reopen the road, the operation would have ended there. But these were not traffic police – they were members of Kostrad, Indonesia's Strategic Reserve, the élite unit better known for atrocities in East Timor than crowd control.

They fired volley after volley into the campus, the clatter of their Swiss-made Steyr rifles interspersed with the deafening boom of tear gas launchers. If these had been live rounds, hundreds would have died. But a narrow calibre rubber round fired at close range at the heart, throat or eyes is deadly.

Gen Wiranto: Apologised for his troops' behaviour

Half an hour later the firing ceased and twenty people lay groaning on the floor with rubber bullet wounds. In the corner, covered with sheets, lay the corpse of one boy who didn't even make it to the ambulance. The students reappeared at dusk and there was more shooting. By the time it was dark, shock had given way to rage, and Molotov cocktails flew out of the campus as the soldiers continued to fire back in.

The last time Indonesian students were shot dead by their own army on 12 May, the consequences were devastating: two days of rioting and arson, 1,200 deaths and, within a fortnight the resignation of President Suharto. Whether such drama will repeat itself is unclear, for a simple reason.

Six months ago, Indonesians were shocked to see their own army killing them. By now it is almost to be expected. "From the beginning they saw us as something to be got rid of," said Wawan's crying friend. "We just wanted to express what all the people are trying to say, but they don't listen. However hard we scream, however hard we yell, they don't listen."

Saddam isolated as allies line up

BY PATRICK COCKBURN

IRAQ IS now in its third confrontation in 12 months with the United States-led coalition and closer to becoming the target of air attack than at any time since President Bill Clinton ordered a missile strike in 1996.

The most obvious explanation for the crisis is that President Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, has overplayed his hand. In February, he escaped a much-heralded air assault through a last-minute agreement with Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General. The Arab world opposed an attack and the Security Council was split.

This time it is President Saddam who is isolated. The line-up against him is similar to that in the days before the prolonged air attack on Iraq in 1991. By ending co-operation with UN weapons inspectors last month, Iraq alienated its potential allies on the Security Council such as France, Russia and China. The Arab world is passive.

The aggressiveness of the Iraqi leader is surprising since he has moved cautiously over the past three years, calculating carefully how far he can go. In 1996, he captured and then immediately withdrew from Arbil, the Kurdish capital, only provoking the US to fire a few missiles at the south of the country.

It may be that President Saddam calculates that an air attack alone, unsupported by ground forces, will do nothing to destabilise his rule. On the contrary, it might do more to destroy the post-Gulf War settlement, under which Iraq's sovereignty is limited by economic sanctions and weapons inspections, than all the diplomatic manoeuvres of France and Russia at the UN. By the same token, President Clinton is loath to order an attack that may undermine a political status quo he wants to preserve.

The lesson of air attacks on Iraq in the past is that they may weaken but do not destroy the authority of the government. In 1991, the allies dropped 88,000 tons of ordnance on Iraq, but it was the break-up of the Iraqi army in the face of ground assault that led to the uprisings in southern Iraq and Kurdistan.

The air assault now planned will be on a lesser scale. It has many limitations. It will mainly be Tomahawk missiles, rather than fixed-wing aircraft because of the fear that pilots would be shot down and captured. These are effective against large fixed targets pre-

Saddam: Overplayed hand

viously identified by intelligence. In the Gulf War the missiles rapidly destroyed Iraq's civil infrastructure of power stations and oil refineries, halting the economy.

Against the Iraqi military an air war is likely to be less effective. Unlike 1991 the Iraqi army does not have to be in battle formation to face a ground attack. It can easily be dispersed. General Wafiq al-Sammara'i, the former head of Iraqi intelligence who defected, says the Iraqi army lost no officer above the rank of colonel from bombs and missiles during the Gulf War.

Of 2,100 Iraqi tanks lost only 10 per cent were destroyed from the air.

The Iraqi security forces, the heart of the regime, are likely to be least affected by bombing. All Iraqi government institutions have had alternative headquarters since the Iran Iraq war.

The Iraqi leadership has in the past made it a firm rule not to use the deep bunkers in Baghdad whose position is known to the allies. President Saddam spent the Gulf War above ground in suburban villas in Baghdad.

One much-trumpeted target would be facilities that might produce chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. But since the UN Special Committee (Unscom) on eliminating such arms has been unable to locate plants used for such purposes, again no clear target is available. An alternative would be to hit all the buildings in which Unscom has placed surveillance cameras, but this would end all future monitoring.

The allies might get lucky. A missile might hit the Iraqi leader. The Iraqi army might move against him.

Both outcomes are unlikely. At the end of the bombing President Clinton will more probably face all the problems he did at the beginning, but will have used up his threat of an air offensive.

Iraqi women waiting in line at a food distribution centre in Baghdad *Karim Sahib/AFP*

Iraqis claim universal support

BY EILEEN ALT POWELL in Baghdad

THOUSANDS OF Iraqis queued outside gasoline stations yesterday as Iraq's official media ignored the loss of Arab support in its confrontation over UN weapons inspections.

Official newspapers published articles praising Saddam Hussein's decision to end all co-operation with the UN Special Commission, and claimed worldwide condemnation of American threats.

"The world calls for dialogue and peace and America seeks war and aggression," the official al-Iraq newspaper said.

"There is condemnation of American threats on both Arab and international levels," al-Thawra, the voice of the ruling Baath party newspaper, said.

At one petrol station, 20 cars queued up in front of each of its eight pumps. "I fear the Americans will hit refineries and there will be a shortage of fuel," said one driver.

Markets in Baghdad were crammed and at the Al-Shorja market, 40-year-old Naima Aidan said she was buying coconut and sugar to make sweets for her four children. "I don't think anything will happen to us because God will keep us safe," she said.

Weasel words serve only to glorify grim reality of war

BY ROBERT FISK

NOT SINCE the journalist Christopher Hitchens proved that Charlton Heston didn't know where Iraq was – just before the 1991 Gulf War, the American actor claimed Bahrain as one of Iraq's neighbours – has so much unadulterated rubbish about the Middle East poured from the American media.

Press commentators, calling for the carpet-bombing of Iraq and warning of a possible nuclear war, have at last proved that if clichés could kill, America would wipe out Saddam Hussein many times over.

How many times have we heard these tired old lines? "The longer he waits, the more time Saddam has to hunker down." (CBS); "The world's bad boys need a real threat to keep them in line," (*Time*); "Is this the moment of truth? (Canadian TV); and, from NBC, "Difficult days lie ahead". Indeed they do – and not just for the journalists who have been pumping out this stuff on cue as if we hadn't heard it in 1990, 1991, 1993, 1996 and February 1998.

Gary Cooper: American hero

But who cares to ask what happens after America's air strikes when the big guns of *The Wall Street Journal* are churning out the kind of stuff that you can find in columnist Lawrence Kaplan's latest contribution to military strategy in the Middle East.

A serious effort to punish Saddam's "malfeasance" (note that legalistic term) would "require more strikes than there are cruise missiles in the US arsenal – thousands, not hundreds, of sorties, as part of a campaign lasting weeks, not days". Such a bombardment "would not make President Clinton another 'Bomber' Harris. It would mean, however, taking hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives".

The former under-secretary of state Joseph Sisco has been sounding off on the networks about "the quiet support of the Arab countries" for air strikes and suggesting Saudi Arabia will allow US planes to use its air bases – which is untrue. "Unfortunately, innocent people will die," he added.

Canadian television audiences were told that "nobody can say that the United States is shooting from the hip". And the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, was allowed to get away with a claim that US strikes were intended "to significantly degrade his [Saddam's] ability to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction" and "to protect his neighbours" – without once being asked which of his neighbours had sought that protection. It is the unquestioning nature of American journalism that constitutes the media's greatest folly in this, the sixth major Gulf crisis since the country's reporters first announced the "defanging" of Saddam in 1991.

While mildly critical editorials on Israel's continued settlement building have appeared in American papers, no connection has been made between Arab frustration at President Bill Clinton's failure to force Israel to abide by the Oslo accords and the Arab refusal to give military support to American forces in the Gulf.

When I was asked on Canadian television on Thursday whether this was "the beginning of the end of UN prestige" in the Middle East, the only possible reply was to suggest that it could prove to be the end of US, rather than UN, prestige. This was met by the interviewer, an otherwise sharp and intelligent man, with a facial expression that resembled my laptop computer when it announces "total disk failure" at the top of the screen.

There are a few droplets of doubt from US television presenters. One woman fronting a prime-time breakfast show did apologise when she confronted the phrase "collateral damage". In fact, she winced when she used the words. But it is otherwise familiar territory – complete with the requisite cowboy images so beloved of the former president Ronald Reagan. My favourite turned up in *Time* magazine this week under the byline of Josef Joffe.

Tired of confronting regional bullies, he suggested that America may have to "go back to *High Noon*, where in the end Gary Cooper had to slug it out with the bad guys all by himself". Ignored was the fact that the old monochrome Western was a total work of fiction – and that Cooper, the fantasy sheriff who'd been having an affair with an imprisoned gangster's moll, almost brought destruction on his own town. But why care when the spurious legends of America's Wild West can be brought in to shore up US policy in the Middle East?

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Sex, death and a Governor's secretary

Anne Marie Fahey (left) was last seen alive on 27 June 1996. Thomas Capano (right), a wealthy lawyer, is accused of her murder *AP*

By David Usborne
in New York

THE MYSTERY has gripped the small East Coast state of Delaware for more than two years. What happened to Anne Marie Fahey, the former scheduling secretary of the Democrat Governor Thomas Carver?

For months after her disappearance on 27 June 1996 there was no clue. Billboards went up on the highways begging for information about her. Was she still alive? Had she been murdered?

Nobody was more anxious for answers than the Governor himself, who appealed finally to President Bill Clinton for some federal assistance. And he got it when a team of FBI agents was dispatched from Washington to join the hunt for the woman. We have answers now, and they are just as grisly as everyone had feared. Ms Fahey, a vivacious and pretty 30-year-old, is indeed dead.

We know too that her body was bundled into a large Igloo cool box and dumped into the Atlantic Ocean, 70 miles off-shore. But with a trial in the case now under way in Wilmington, the state capital, the key piece in the gruesome jigsaw is still missing. Who killed her and why?

State prosecutors and the FBI think that they know that too. The man who stands charged with the killing is Thomas Capano, a bond lawyer and the eldest son of one of Wilmington's wealthiest and most powerful of families. Married with four children, Mr Capano had a steamy affair with Fahey, which had been concealed even from some of her closest friends.

He is accused of killing her when she tried to end their illicit relationship. It is not just the position of Ms Fahey in the Governor's office or the social standing of Mr Capano, a former deputy state attorney-general, which has propelled the trial into the headlines. There is also family intrigue. Mr Capano, 49, has been betrayed by two of his brothers, Louis and Gerard. Their arms twisted by the FBI, both agreed to testify against him. Their stories, indeed, are the crux of the prosecution's case.

Even as the trial started, lawyers for Mr Capano changed tactics. In anticipation of the story that Gerard would tell about how he helped his brother take the cooler and body out to sea on his boat, they acknowledged that Ms Fahey's body had been inside and that their client knew it.

This grossly contradicted a number of previous statements from Mr Capano. For months, he had insisted he knew nothing of the fate of his ex-lover, even though the last time she had been seen alive was with him at a restaurant in Philadelphia – on the night she vanished. But Mr Capano, the lawyers still insisted, did not kill her. She had died in an "outrageous, horrible, tragic accident". What accident, they have yet to say. It was a manoeuvre designed to draw the sting from Gerard Capano's expected testimony.

It may have been effective. But when Gerard finally took the stand this week, his story was more vivid and ghastly – and compelling – than any horror film script.

Several months before the night of the alleged crime, Thomas had come to his brother with a story about two people attempting to blackmail him. He might need to kill one of them, he told Gerard. If that happened, could he borrow his boat, the *Summer Wind*, to dump the corpse in the ocean? Though perplexed, Gerard said nothing to the police. He did not, he said, take his brother seriously. According to Gerard, it was on 28 June 1996 that his brother turned up at his house saying that he had "done it".

The next morning, they set out from shore, with the cooler on deck. When, finally, they heaved the icebox overboard, it refused to sink. Gerard said he then took a hunting rifle that was on board and fired a shell into the cooler. Red liquid oozed from the hole, but still it would not sink.

Next, Gerard testified, the pair hauled the cooler back on board. At that point, he handed a heavy anchor to Thomas and told him "he was on his own". Gerard went forward and stared out to sea. He turned round just in time, however, to witness part of a leg and foot slipping beneath the waves.

Gerard Capano's testimony transfixed the courtroom. At the back, the mother of the Capano brothers, whose family had once been one of the proudest in Wilmington, wept quietly. In another sat the mother and brother of Ms Fahey. To add to the drama, the prosecution placed a large cooler, complete with bullet holes, on the courtroom floor.

It was, it must be said, not the cooler in question. That is to be submitted as evidence later. By a stroke of luck for the prosecution, the cool box turned up after a fisherman heard about the case on the news. He had found the cooler while out at sea and, ignoring the strange holes in its sides, put it to good use – storing fresh fish in it for sale to customers.

The FBI was able to trace the cool box to a supply shop and determine it had been bought with one of Thomas Capano's credit cards.

Before the prosecution rests, it will also bring forward Louis Capano. He will testify how some days later he helped his brother dispose of furniture from his house that was stained with blood. The FBI also had luck there.

While Ms Fahey's body will never be recovered, a DNA sample was obtained from a medical facility. There was a positive match between that and the blood on the furniture. But the jury, the Governor and all of Delaware are now awaiting the defence.

Could there be another explanation for Ms Fahey's demise? If Thomas Capano has a convincing story about an accident – outrageous and horrible – he may yet be saved. If convicted, he could himself face death.

Lumber firm loses licence in eco battle

By Andrew Gumbel
in Los Angeles

A LOGGING company at the centre of a bitter environmental dispute over the fate of California's redwoods has had its licence suspended because of its repeated violations of state forestry regulations and "gross negligence".

The Pacific Lumber Co, which owns the highest concentration of old-growth redwoods in the world, was told this week by the state Department of Forestry that it would not be allowed to cut any trees for the rest of the year and would have to reapply for a licence to resume operating in 1999.

The decision marked a victory for environmentalists who have accused the company of wantonly destroying ancient groves, silting up rivers, provoking landslides and attacking the habitats of endangered species including the spotted owl and the coho salmon.

A handful of activists from the group Earth First! have been camping for months on top of the tallest redwoods owned by Pacific Lumber in a last-ditch effort to save the trees.

The Department of Forestry, which briefly suspended Pacific Lumber's licence a year ago, said there had been more than 200 violations of its rules over the past three years and two recent criminal citations.

Environmentalists also hold the company responsible for the death of an activist crushed by a felled redwood in September, although no charges have been pressed in that case.

"This decision is not an easy one to make, considering the effects on employees, but we simply cannot allow these violations to continue," Richard Wilson, forestry department director, said in a statement.

Pacific Lumber said it would not fight the department's decision. "Frankly the company and I are embarrassed by the suspension and we have reached the conclusion that no valid purpose would be served by appealing," Pacific Lumber's president, John Campbell, said. He also announced that 180 of the company's 1,500 loggers would be laid off with immediate effect.

Outside of a handful of small national parks, the redwoods of northern California have been disappearing with alarming speed over the past few years. Greatest attention has been focused recently on the 200,000-acre Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County, owned by Pacific Lumber, where once thickly clustered hillsides have turned bald and rare species are dying out.

The federal government recently agreed to buy 7,000 acres of the forest for $480m – 25 times the market price – in a deal hotly contested by environmentalists as too little, too late at way too high a price.

Corruption in China spawns a bestseller

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

AS SHE lays bare the darker social and economic consequences of China's two decades of reform, He Qinglian does not mince her words. In this year's best-selling book, *The Pitfalls of Modernisation*, the 42-year-old author launches the sort of broadside against Chinese officialdom that might be expected to result in an unwanted knock at the door by the public security goons.

The writer lashes out at "the politics of swapping money for power", the "excessive gap between poor and rich", and at a potential "social crisis". Nine publishers turned down the manuscript, fearing the consequences of printing such a book.

These days, Ms He finds herself under assault, but not from the authorities. "The problems do not come from the government but from some cultural hooligans in China. The hooligans steal my name to produce a fake book, an illegal publication under my name. In China there are oo effective measures to protect copyright."

And how are sales of her real book? "The official oumber of copies my book has sold is almost 200,000, but the pirated copies are five or six time this oumber," she says.

Ms He is a publishing pheoomenoo in China. Her book is an academic, carefully argued attack on corrupt Chinese officialdom and oo the institutionalised graft that has enriched those in power. Such has been its success since publicatioo earlier this year that, like all bestsellers, it soon caught the eye of the pirate publishers. Ms He is even suing one writer for allegedly passing off his work under her name.

Her main concern, however, is the gap between the theory of China's reform and uglier reality. It is now exactly 20 years since China's former strongman Deng Xiaoping launched his reform programme, and Ms He lambasts the powerful élite, which during that period amassed huge amounts of money, mostly by siphoning off state assets. "Several illegal people with power accumulated their money by exploiting the shortcomings of the system ... In less than two decades, China has seen a transformation from egalitarianism to a considerable gap between the rich and poor," she writes.

The "power-holders" in government departments and enterprises have accumulated "huge wealth at a speed the world has rarely seen", she

Ms He: lashing out at 'the politics of swapping money for power'

says, by abusing their control over permits and the "power to distribute resources".

No one in China is unaware of the country's endemic corruption. The past few weeks have seen the sacking of China's top anti-corruption prosecutor because he had "violated discipline", and revelations of a massive £460m VAT fraud ring involving 89 defendants. But Ms He goes further in specifying the ills of society that have resulted from what she calls a "crippled" reform programme. "I think the largest drawback of 20 years' reform is that we overlooked social justice, while emphasising economic development," she said from her home in Shenzhen, in southern China. She doubts that the official anti-corruption drive will be successful.

"The problem arises from an incomplete monitoring system," she says, pointing the finger at the notion of a one-party state trying to police itself. She cites the "collusion between underworld society and officials".

Such views were not easy to get into print. Ms He tried nine publishing houses in five provinces. "None dared to publish it. They all felt the social value and market value of the book was high. But they could not afford the political risk," she says. As always in China, it needed someone with political clout to back the book. Liu Ji, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and close to China's President, Jiang Zemin, had it published as part of a series under the theme of "China's problems". Mr Liu "thinks the book is a patriotic book", says Ms He, an economist by training who is still on the staff of the *Shenzhen Legal Daily*.

Patriotic or not, it is carefully pitched to expose problems in Chinese society, while not attacking China's leaders, or the Deng programme. The party itself, after all, is ostensibly as worried about corruption and the growing wealth gap as is the author. The book appears to have been adopted by those who say they are trying to clean up the system. Ms He said: "In the central party school and the central government ministries, many people have told me privately their (high) opinions of the book."

But she plays safe when it comes to the question of whether the answer is political reform. "The problem is when to reform and how to reform. I think it will take some time before (the party) reach a consensus. I think they might think about political reform because of corruption," she says.

An Su Ryon, 11, one of many children suffering from malnutrition, is examined at a clinic in Wonsan, North Korea *AP/Red Cross*

TB threat to starving Korea

BY TERESA POOLE

NORTH KOREA is facing a "critical" food shortage as it enters its fourth winter of famine, with diseases such as tuberculosis on the rise and a generation of stunted children suffering from long-term malnutrition, Western aid officials said this week.

Donor fatigue and the "complicated debate around the politics of providing support" to the world's last Stalinist state should oot be allowed to divert world atteotion from North Korea's humanitarian tragedy, said the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Dr Astrid Heiberg, the federation's president, in Peking after a visit to North Korea, said there could be "a very, very heavy toll" from respiratory diseases and tuberculosis this winter, unless attention was given to food aid. The federation has launched a US$9m appeal for next year, particularly for drugs, essential medicines, and blankets, jackets and coal for the winter. "The situation is critical," she said.

Apart from children under three years of the age, who are the target of the food aid, the condition of the general population was not improving. Dr Heiberg said she had visited places "where the children are clearly stunted. A 10-year-old looked as if he were six or seven; a five-year-old looked as if she were three, maybe two." In one rural hospital, there were 10 beds available, "but they only had food for three patients". Substitute food, containing up to 70 per cent cattle fodder, was produced and eaten throughout the country, causing diarrhoea and protein-deficiency oedemas.

On the question of whether there were "massive" deaths from hunger in certain areas, Margareta Wahlstrom, the federation's under-secretary general for disaster relief, said: "No one can say. If you ask our agency colleagues, they say, we don't know. Do people die from hunger in the areas where we are actually working? Probably yes. Because severe chronic malnutrition leads to premature death ... In large numbers? No, I don't think so. But it is bad enough that there are maybe a small amount."

North Korean doctors had confirmed that infant and child mortality was up, and women in the country said fewer babies were being born.

Meanwhile, the North Korean regime has its own priorities, recently proceeding with an expensive satellite launch while asking for food aid, and feeding its huge army first.

Dr Heiberg said she did not want "to sound too naive" on the questioo of the military's share of the country's domestically produced food supply. "I know there is a system that the military has the first pick of the rations that are given ... they have kind of a priority when it comes to the food supply." But she stressed that this was not true for the international food aid.

North Korean government officials refuse to admit that the famine has as much to do with government policy as natural disasters, and are cooinced that the country can soon revert to self-sufficiency. "All of them repeatedly said that they would overcome, they would have victory in the end," Dr Heiberg said.

Pyongyang has oow eveo set a completely unrealistic target for a self-sufficient pharmaceutical industry by 2000.

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Terror attacks on Koreans rise in Japan

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY in Tokyo

LATE LAST summer, a Korean girl named Kwon Woo Min was walking home from school in western Tokyo when a middle-aged man struck her on the head with an umbrella, and rode quickly away on his bicycle.

A few minutes later, as she waited at the railway station another man spat on her. The next day, a Korean school in Tokyo received anonymous phone calls from a man who threatened to kidnap a pupil, strip her and dump her on a river bank.

Dozens more threatening calls were made over the next few days – razor blades were sent through the post, and Korean schools in Japan went into a panic after someone rang the General Association of Korean Residents claiming to have put cyanide in a school water tank.

For the past two and half months Korean Japanese have been taunted, shoved, spat on, threatened, stabbed and even murdered. The majority of the victims have been young girls, travelling to and from school in traditional Korean dress.

There are about 650,000 ethnic Koreans living in Japan and since the early part of the century they have suffered prejudice and occasional violence. This month a United Nations human rights panel listed discrimination against Koreans as one of 30 areas of concern in Japan. But things have rarely been as bad as they are now.

"People feel fearful and scared, but also very angry," said So Chung On, of the General Association, known in Japan as Chosen Soren. "When the situation on the Korean peninsula is tense, when Japan propagates hostility against North Korea, people act on these false allegations, and they victimise people who cannot resist. They aim at schoolchildren, schoolgirls who cannot resist. It is very nasty."

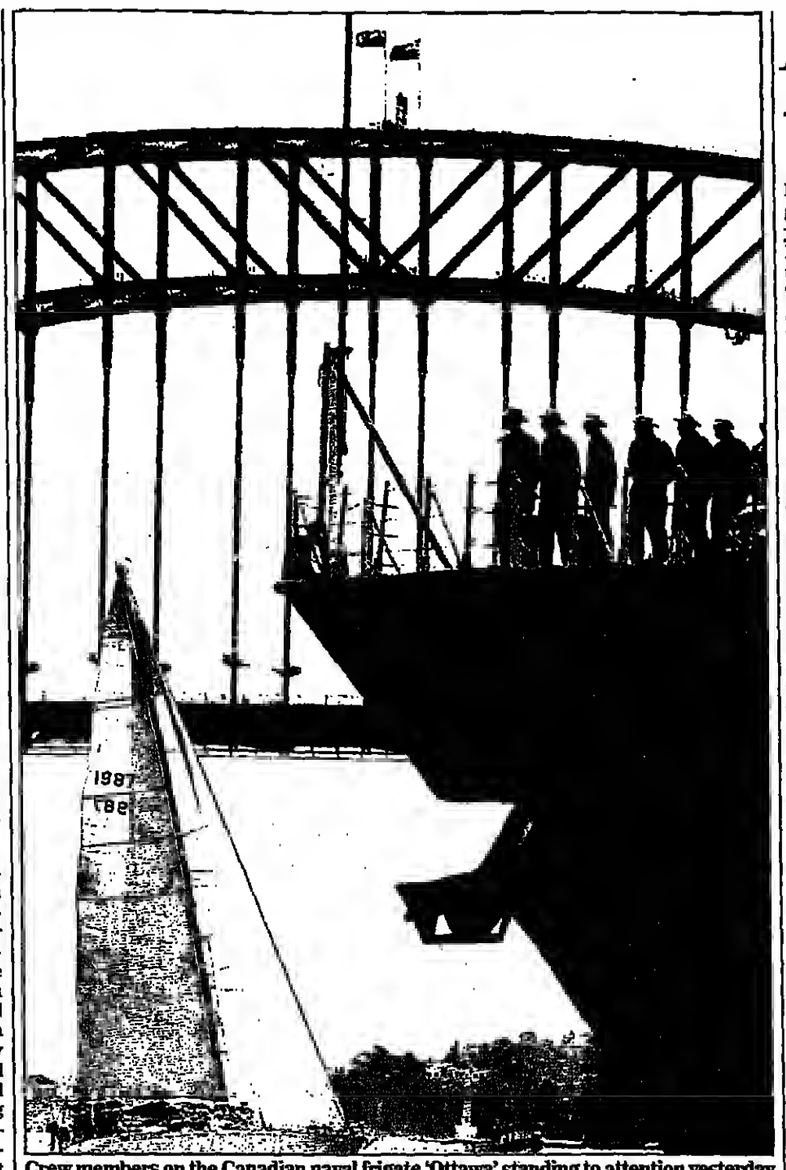
The latest wave of attacks has a very particular cause – the launch by North Korea of a long-range rocket through the skies high above northern Japan on 31 August. It was initially identified by the American military as a ballistic missile; Pyongyang insisted that it was a civilian rocket bearing a small satellite into orbit. Either way, it was a shock to the Japanese who knew nothing of the rocket's existence until after it had plunged into the sea. Sanctions were imposed and the next day, the attacks on the schoolgirls began.

There were 33 separate incidents in September. Last week, petrol bombs were thrown into the Tokyo and Yokohama offices of Chosen Soren. A month ago an official on night duty in the Chiba city branch died after being beaten, strangled, stabbed, soaked in petrol and set alight. The police at first appeared reluctant to acknowledge a political motivation, insisting the killing was part of a botched burglary.

There have been no arrests, although most believe the culprits are members of Japanese right-wing organisations, who regularly parade through the streets, waving Rising Sun flags and blaring martial music.

Leaders of the Chosen Soren are senior members of the Workers' Party and, as the *de facto* North Korean embassy in Tokyo, it is also believed to channel money from Korean businessmen in Japan to the government in Pyongyang.

In 1994, there were similar attacks during the nuclear crisis when Pyongyang was suspected of developing nuclear weapons. Then, as now, the victims were schoolgirls whose uniform consists of the Korean national costume, a skirt and short jacket called chima chogori. "Even if we don't know whether North Korea launched a missile or a satellite, it should take responsibility for causing anxiety," said Kim Yong, a Korean mother. "But what did Korean schools do? What does it have to do with young children?"



Crew members on the Canadian naval frigate 'Ottawa' standing to attention yesterday as they sail by Sydney Harbour Bridge, ready to berth for a goodwill visit *Reuters*

Aid streams in to Honduras

BY ELOY AGUILAR in Tegucigalpa

FOREIGN AID from around the globe streamed in to Honduras yesterday as President Carlos Roberto Flores urged his countrymen on national radio to "face the apocalyptic reality" and "rebuild the country as rapidly as possible".

Officials put the Honduran death toll at 7,000, with another 11,000 people injured, 10,000 missing and 800,000 houses damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Mitch. In Nicaragua, the toll was 2,362 dead, 287 injured, 970 missing and 36,000 houses destroyed or damaged.

The president said repairs could cost four times Honduras' $1.2bn annual budget. He urged the United States and other countries to forgive Honduras' $4.3bn (£2.6bn) debt, grant it free-trade status and help with "a massive supply of fresh resources to aid in rebuilding the country".

In the northern Honduran town of La Mesa, US soldiers planned to help open a key road buried by the hurricane. There were reports that diverting equipment to the Gulf may have slowed the US relief effort.

In the Honduran capital of Tegucigalpa, law students dug with shovels alongside earth-moving equipment, trying to rid the city of thick layers of mud.

Six Japan defence-force aircraft left yesterday on a relief mission to Honduras in Tokyo's first dispatch of military units for disaster aid abroad. (*AP*)

A WEEK IN THE LIFE
NOEL RAWLINSON, GOLD MINER

Olympian spirit spurs search for Klondike's crock of gold

A PAIR of brawny forearms come bristling through the gloom of the narrow tunnel. A beard the shape and size of a shovel quickly follows – then the glow of the eyes, set just off the parallel, seeming to focus on a distant point over my left shoulder.

A hunched figure pushes the old rusted trolley down the tracks, deep into the blackness beneath the Blue Mountains. Somewhere in these hills, there is gold – and Noel Rawlinson, the last gold miner of Ophir, New South Wales, is determined to find it.

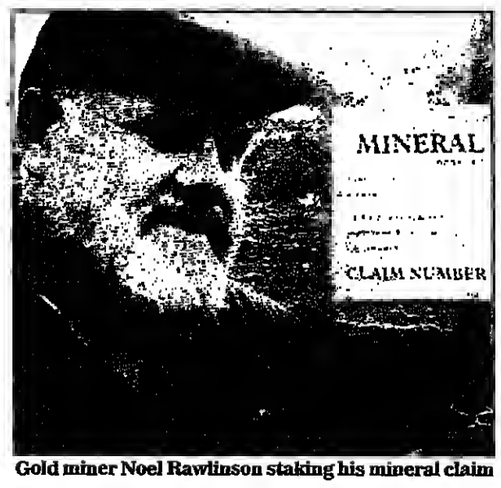
This was the Australian Klondike, the island continent's first workable goldfield, discovered nearly 150 years ago. For the past 15 of them, Noel has been chipping out a lonely living from the bare earth.

A while ago, he hit upon the one priceless nugget of imagination that might just end up making his fortune. For when the modern equivalent of a gold rush comes to the "lucky country" in two years' time, competitors at the Sydney Olympiad will be competing for medals forged from the pure base metal found at Ophir.

It's Monday and water is dripping from the Heath-Robinson collection of rails, pulleys and hoists that, between them, form the capitalisation of the Gunnadoo gold mine.

The name represents the expeditious approach required to establish, from scratch, an untidy collection of tin shacks huddled deep in the gully between slopes of wet forest ("Gunnadoo this, Gunnadoo that").

Emerging from living quarters that make the spartan conditions of an Olympic village seem luxurious, the old gold miner rescues a hard hat from the lean-to, redoubt of the resident flock of peahens in the persistent downpours of this Australian spring. The Gunnadoo spirit seems, temporarily, remote, as another week of toil beckons.



Gold miner Noel Rawlinson staking his mineral claim

A dentist's chair is another incongruity amid the clutter. Propped against it are the tools of the trade – a humble pick and shovel, same as the convicts who first came here in 1851.

For years ships refused to dock at Melbourne or Sydney because their crews would desert, heading off into the inhospitable bush, drawn by the glister of gold. This morning, as a meaty fist closes around the haft of each implement, and the plastic brim of the helmet diverts the rivulets from the bushy eyebrows, a pang of gold fever stirs.

The paydirt lies under 80 feet or more of unyielding basalt, in the beds of what used to be surface rivers. At any moment, a stroke of the blade might hit a fold or crevice where the "nuggety gold" accumulated in eddies as ancient waters drained the hillsides.

On Tuesday, he takes a break from "hard yakka" to visit the nearby town of Orange. A mining settlement of 30,000 souls, it is full of characters. Four hours from Sydney, there is nothing west of here for 2,000 miles.

Visits to the post office and store by a burly caller from the hills occasion little comment. There is mail to post to suppliers, and the time of day to pass with officials from the local council. In coojunction with two neighbouring counties, they have struck a deal with the Olympic authorities to buy the six kilograms needed to make the medals for the Games. Everyone is looking forward to a dinner at the local hotel where sporting personalities will launch the appeal to pay for it.

Back in the homestead the following day Noel is joined by his apprentice – his son Jason. The gleaming grains just cover the palm of the 17-year-old's hand after another lesson in panning. The day's takings of a thriving business bring a grunt of satisfaction from his father. At 61, he is looking to hand over the reins to a younger man.

But Jason's ambitions lie with other more lucrative gold mining operations. Father and son grow tense whenever this subject is mentioned.

Cadia, owner of the world's biggest earth grinder, which is capable of churning out half a million ounces a year, has guaranteed the six kilograms if supplies from Gunnadoo mine run short. Noel comes away from this discussion determined that Gunnadoo will come through. The dream of a crock of gold has kept him hard at it throughout the winter downpours. He is determined to achieve his goal.

Friday brings a trickle of tourists, who have heard of the Olympic connection, the amazing story of the one-man gold mine and his boy apprentice.

Beneath the iron grey of Noel's bristles, the chin juts proudly as he begins another history lessoo for the assembled tourists in the half-light of the tunnel. He explains how transportation to Van Dieman's land – as Australia used to be called – met the Australian dream in the glint of a panhandler's gold.

For a minute, for tourists clutching their $3 bag of gold-bearing gravel, the dream survives.

JAKE LYNCH

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BUSINESS

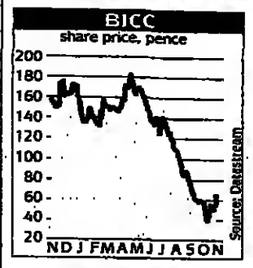
BRIEFING

Storms hit Independent Insurance

INDEPENDENT INSURANCE shares yesterday plunged 12 per cent after the general insurer warned of an estimated £15m hit on UK weather claims this year and said it was postponing a planned move into retail financial services because of recent market turmoil, resulting in another £5m charge.

The company said it expected the net loss from recent UK floods would be £7m, resulting in an estimated total 1998 loss on UK weather claims of £15m, while claims from Hurricane Georges would cost it about £3.5m. The insurer said it had secured significant new business gains in the third quarter and was confident it would achieve a profit on its underwriting business this year. Independent's shares fell 32.5p to close at 229p after it listed the claims losses and charges.

BICC shares soar on Wassall stake



SHARES IN BICC soared nearly 17 per cent yesterday to 66.5p after the acquisitive construction group Wassall revealed it had built up a 7 per cent stake in the cable and construction group. In an announcement to the Stock Exchange after the market closed on Thursday, Wassall said it had spent approximately £28.9m building up a 7.35 per cent stake over the past 12 months. Wassall yesterday described the stake as an investment.

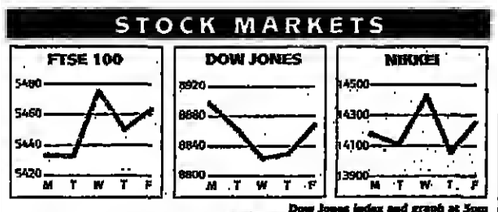
Westport in £18m MediaOne deal

RICHARD THOMPSON and Chris Akers, the erstwhile supremos of Queen's Park Rangers and Leeds United, teamed up again yesterday when Mr Thompson's Westport Group announced the reverse takeover of MediaOne International in a deal worth around £18m.

The Melbourne-based MediaOne, established in 1991 by Jeff Chapman and specialising in sports programme distribution and development, will retain a 72 per cent equity stake in the new group, which will be named Sportsworld Media Group. Mr Akers, who will be a non-executive director of the new venture, is understood to have brokered the deal between Mr Thompson and Mr Chapman.

Thompson Associates is expected to liquidate its 15 per cent shareholding when the reorganised shares hit the market in December. Mr Chapman will have a 65 per cent controlling interest.

STOCK MARKETS

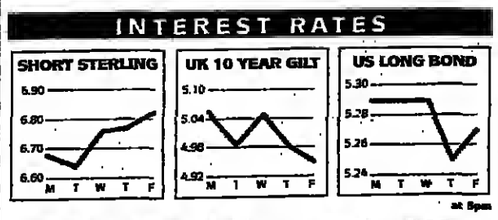


Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

INDICES

Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yields(%)
FTSE 100	5463.20	14.20	0.26	6183.70	4599.20	1.02
FTSE 250	4826.40	-18.80	-0.39	5970.90	4247.60	2.12
FTSE 350	2603.60	3.90	0.15	2969.10	2210.40	1.21
FTSE All Share	2518.44	3.71	0.15	2886.52	2143.53	1.32
FTSE SmallCap	2067.10	1.40	0.07	2793.80	1834.40	3.58
FTSE Fledgling	1136.40	1.00	0.09	1517.10	1046.20	3.64
FTSE AIM	820.40	-2.00	-0.24	1146.90	761.30	1.13
FTSE EBLOC 100	889.38	-0.47	-0.05	...	...	...
Dow Jones	8870.42	41.96	0.48	9367.84	7349.99	1.69
Nikkei	14268.21	193.15	1.37	17352.95	12787.90	1.03
Hang Seng	9997.99	49.81	0.50	11926.16	6544.79	4.00
Dax	4639.65	-0.24	-0.01	6217.83	3677.27	1.91

INTEREST RATES

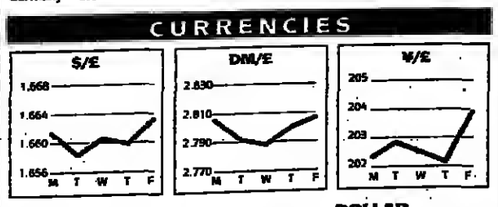


at 5pm

MONEY MARKET RATES / BOND YIELDS

Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 Year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	6.95	-0.76	6.45	-1.49	4.95	-1.75	4.60	-2.00
US	5.40	-0.47	5.06	-0.97	4.82	...	5.27	...
Japan	0.40	-0.05	0.46	-0.05	0.84	-0.98	1.38	-1.03
Germany	3.64	-0.13	3.55	-0.62	4.20	-1.41	5.18	-1.04

CURRENCIES



POUND

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6633	+0.28c	1.6969
D-Mark	2.8088	+0.41pf	2.9279
Yen	203.92	+¥1.21	213.18
£ Index	101.30	+0.50	103.90

DOLLAR

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Sterling	0.6012	-0.10p	0.5893
D-Mark	1.6882	-0.11pf	1.7250
Yen	122.59	+¥0.5T	125.72
$ Index	107.20	-0.50	105.60

OTHER INDICATORS

	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil ($)	11.67	-0.19	19.26
Gold ($)	296.35	-0.70	306.00
Silver ($)	5.13	0.14	5.06

	Index	Chg	Yr ago	Next figs
GDP	115.40	3.00	112.04	Dec
RPI	164.40	3.20	158.30	Oct
Base Rates		6.75	7.25	

*at 5pm

www.bloomberg.com/uk

SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

Australia ($)	2.5077	Mexican (nuevo peso)	15.03
Austria (schillings)	19.08	Netherlands (guilders)	3.0592
Belgium (francs)	56.08	New Zealand ($)	2.9668
Canada ($)	2.4946	Norway (krone)	12.11
Cyprus (pounds)	0.7997	Portugal (escudos)	276.96
Denmark (krone)	10.39	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0594
Finland (markka)	8.3538	Singapore ($)	2.6196
France (francs)	9.1085	Spain (pesetas)	230.37
Germany (marks)	2.7268	South Africa (rands)	9.1893
Greece (drachma)	457.88	Sweden (krone)	13.17
Hong Kong ($)	12.42	Switzerland (francs)	2.2445
Ireland (punts)	1.0898	Thailand (bahts)	56.16
Indian (rupees)	63.21	Turkey (lirasi)	468850
Israel (shekels)	6.6146	USA ($)	1.6160
Italy (lira)	2701		
Japan (yen)	198.71		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0590		
Malta (lira)	0.6073		

Rates for indication purposes only

Source: Thomas Cook

Fund managers go in MGAM clear-out

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

MORGAN GRENFELL Asset Management, the City fund management group, has sacked 18 senior staff following a management shake-up.

The departures include Julian Johnson, a highly respected City figure who was responsible for managing overseas clients' funds, and Graham Bamping, who ran the London end of the Asian business.

The redundancies come just days after Morgan Grenfell was again in the spotlight as a result of the decision by its former star fund manager, Peter Young, to appear in court on fraud charges in a dress.

Yesterday the former MGAM executive Glyn Owen, who received a lifetime ban from working in the City, allegedly because of his failure to supervise Mr Young properly, said he was appealing to the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Robert Smith, chief executive of MGAM, said yesterday that the redundancies, which took place late on Thursday, were a consequence of a reorganisation within the firm and had nothing to do with any underlying problems at the business. He said that in many areas the firm was still recruiting.

"It was a very grim day. This is nothing to do with losing funds. In the UK we have added £5bn of net new business this year," said Mr Smith.

"The amount of funds we have under management is just under £100bn globally. Until yesterday we had taken on 143 people net in the UK."

MGAM said the redundancies were the result of an internal reorganisation which followed the appointments of Greg Fisher, 31, and James Goulding, 34, to head a combined UK and European asset management business. The operations were previously managed entirely separately and bringing together the two businesses had resulted in a number of positions becoming redundant.

Mr Bamping was also a casualty of the decision taken to run all the Asian business from Singapore.

The departures are particularly significant since fund management is one of the few areas of the City where redundancy is virtually unheard of.

Although the firm has made considerable headway in recovering lost ground with UK institutions since the Peter Young affair, confidence among retail clients has yet to recover, particularly in Germany, where Morgan Grenfell is still seeing net redemptions by private investors.

Andrew Millar: Sacked by British Biotech for lifting the secrecy on trials of the company's star drugs

Biotech willing to settle with Millar

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

BRITISH BIOTECH yesterday raised the prospect of a settlement of the damaging legal battle with the sacked whistle-blower Andrew Millar as it unveiled a radical shift in its drug development strategy.

The troubled biotechnology company also revealed that it would extend three trials for its star anti-cancer drug Marimastat by up to year, with results expected between 2001 and 2002, at an extra cost of $2.5m (£1.6m).

Elliot Goldstein, the recently appointed chief executive, said the company did not rule out an out-of-court settlement with Dr Millar, the former director of clinical research.

Dr Goldstein, a former SmithKline Beecham executive who took over from Dr Millar's arch-rival Keith McCullagh in September, said: "If it could be done in reasonable fashion, obviously we would want to do so. I wouldn't rule out the possibility." The company has come under pressure from a number of shareholders to settle the case and concentrate on its clinical work.

British Biotech sacked Dr Millar in April for lifting the secrecy on two trials of the company's star drugs Marimastat and Zacutex, for pancreatitis, and discussing its findings with some investors.

The dismissal triggered a huge row between Dr Millar and Dr McCullagh, which led to a plunge in British Biotech's share price and undermined investors' confidence in the rest of the sector.

Separately, British Biotech announced the closure of its marketing operations and said it wanted to pursue partnerships with big pharmaceutical groups to develop and sell its products. The decision is a complete departure from Dr McCullagh's strategy of creating a "new Glaxo". Together with the closure of a laboratory in Oxford, it will lead to 28 redundancies and create annual cost savings of around £2.5m a year.

Brazil and IMF seal $41bn bail-out

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington
AND LEA PATERSON
in London

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday announced details of its long-awaited $41bn (£25bn) loan package for Brazil, following weeks of intense negotiations.

Michel Camdessus, IMF managing director, said: "The Brazilian authorities and an IMF team have successfully concluded negotiations on a strong three-year programme of economic and financial reform. The way is now open for the international community to provide financial support to Brazil."

The Brazilian stock market surged more than 2 per cent on the news, although the reaction in other financial centres was more muted.

Analysts said that the main details of the package – seen as key if Brazil is to avoid the economic chaos that has engulfed much of the emerging world – were in line with expectations.

The package includes $18bn from the IMF, $4.5bn from the World Bank, $4.5bn from the Inter-American Development Bank, $5bn from the US and $9bn from other nations, including the UK, which will provide credit of up to $1.25bn.

According to the Brazilian finance ministry, the IMF will release $9bn to Brazil as soon as the three-year loan package is approved by the IMF board. A further $9bn could be released in early 1999.

The deal does not draw on the new emergency fund proposed by US President Bill Clinton at the IMF/World Bank annual meetings, and agreed by the G7 group of the world's richest nations at the end of last month.

The new emergency fund, which is intended to help countries with good financial standing stave off attacks from speculators, is apparently being held in reserve.

The package is intended not only to help prevent a financial crisis in Brazil, but to demonstrate the commitment of the US and the multilateral institutions to Latin America.

There had been fears that after passing through Asia and Russia, the financial crisis that has dominated world markets since last year would move to America's closest neighbours.

"The success of Brazil's efforts will greatly brighten the economic prospects of the region as a whole," Mr Camdessus said.

The deal had been under discussion since September, when Brazil first came under attack from currency speculators. It was the subject of intense negotiations during the annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank.

It follows the re-election of President Fernando Cardoso and agreement in Brazil on a tough new austerity package to slim the country's fiscal deficit.

Most economists agreed that the package should be enough to avoid a devaluation of the Brazilian real in the short to medium term.

The Brazilian government is committed to keeping its fixed currency regime, which is credited with extinguishing the country's hyper-inflation and helping to attract billions of dollars of investment.

Nick Stamenkovic, chief economist at Bank Austria Creditanstalt Futures, said: "It's a step in the right direction, although it shouldn't be forgotten that Brazil is not out of the woods yet."

Experts said all eyes would now be on the Brazilian Congress, which has yet to ratify President Cardoso's tough fiscal package.

Tokyo watchdog raps DKB

BY ANDREW GARFIELD

JAPAN'S Securities and Exchange Surveillance Commission is recommending that disciplinary action be taken against Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the City investment bank, for falsifying reports on mispriced client trades.

The exact action will now have to be decided by the Ministry of Finance, to whom the case has been referred. However, at least one firm has in the past been suspended from trading for two to three days for very similar offences.

The offences relate to 18 share trades which took place between April 1997 and July 1998. The firm maintains that no one has suffered any financial loss as a result of what it believes to be genuine error rather than maliciously motivated action. The firm also points out that during the same period the firm carried out 200,000 trades.

It is understood that the discrepancies totalled no more than $20,000.

However, the fact that the firm faces public censure will be a serious embarrassment particularly at a time when DKB is seeking to rebuild its reputation after the big losses which it has suffered over the last few months.

A spokesman said: "These are minor rule breaches but we always take what the regulators say very seriously, and are giving our full co-operation."

Dresdner is not contesting the ruling and has agreed to co-operate fully with the Japanese authorities. So far no individual has been disciplined. According to sources familiar with the incident, the trades were executed at prices which were different from those quoted to clients when the orders were taken. The error was later compounded by the fact that that when the discrepancies were subsequently discovered the firm neglected to inform the clients concerned.

The irregularities came to light after a regular audit by the Japanese financial watchdog.

It is believed unlikely that anyone stands to lose their job as a result. DKB employs around 200 people in Tokyo.

Slough wins £276m bid battle for Bilton

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

SLOUGH ESTATES, the property group, yesterday bought its troubled rival Bilton for £276m after a last-minute swoop on the investment trust controlled by the Bilton family.

The takeover will land Ron Groom, Bilton's joint managing director, with a payoff of around £624,000, its second golden handshake in six years, following the £1m he pocketed when he left the company in 1992. Three other directors, including the chairman, Hugh Free, are set to share more than £400,000.

Slough, which bid 313.5p in cash and shares, emerged victorious from a bitter two-month bid battle, after agreeing to buy Glenhazel Investment Trust, which owns 29.4 per cent in Bilton, for £79.4m. The purchase of Glenhazel, which has no interests apart from Bilton, pushed Slough's stake in the industrial property company above the required 50 per cent threshold just hours before the offer closed.

Last night Slough, advised by PricewaterhouseCoopers – believed to be the first accountancy firm to advise on a hostile takover – controlled 89.3 per cent of Bilton. The Bilton board conceded defeat and told shareholders to sell.

Sir Nigel Mobbs, the Slough chairman, said Glenhazel had been swayed by "the logic of our bid and value", which had been revised from an earlier £261m. However, industry experts said Bilton's fate was sealed by a rift among the offspring of the late patriarch Percy Bilton and the members of the board.

They pointed out that two of his sons and a close associate of a third sat on a trust, the Percy Bilton 1954 Settlement, which controlled the majority of votes in Glenhazel.

Mr Groom and company secretary, Priya Ponnaiyah, were also on that trust. Hazel Lyon, Percy Bilton's daughter, and John Rowe, a close associate of Derek, Percy's son, were believed to be in favour of the Slough offer, while Mr Groom and Ms Ponnaiyah were against.

This left another family member, Donald Bilton, with the decisive vote on the five-strong trust. Insiders believe that he voted in favour of Slough, giving it a 3-2 majority.

City analysts said a key factor in Slough's favour was the decision by Schroders, Bilton's largest institutional shareholder, to sell its stake earlier this week. Bilton closed up 8p to 306.5p, while Slough closed down 5.5p to 281p.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

A LATE RALLY allowed Footsie to end the week with a gain. The index, down 78.4 points at one time, finished 14.2 higher at 5,463.2. But trading was thin. Most of the activity was generated by changed analysts' profit estimates and recommendations. Mid cap shares were weak but the small caps made modest headway. Reckitt & Colman slumped after warning of a sales slowdown. The shares crashed 150p (after 168p) to 900p with Seaq volume at 5.7 million shares.

Derek Pain, page 21

NEW YORK

SHARE PRICES opened modestly higher, boosted by hopes that the IMF's $42bn aid package for Brazil would halt the spread of recession through emerging countries. Prices forged further ahead by midday with the Dow Jones more than 50 points higher. Financials gained ground on hopes that the FOMC will cut interest rates again at its meeting next week. Oil shares firmed initially in anticipation of an air attack on Iraq, but profit-taking quickly set in midday.

TOKYO

HONDA led the benchmark Nikkei 225 index 193.15 higher to 14,268.21, on hopes of a national sales tax cut. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi will meet opposition Liberal Party head Ichiro Ozawa on Monday to discuss an alliance. Reducing or eliminating the consumption tax may be a prerequisite for their joining forces. Honda climbed 2.7 per cent as it said profit rose 25 per cent to a record ¥158.3bn yen in the six months through September and raised its full-year group net profit forecast to ¥280bn.

HONG KONG

THE HANG SENG index rose 0.5 per cent to 9997.99, led by Sun Hung Kai Properties, the largest developer by capitalisation. "Money is still flowing in, so people are chasing the stocks up," said John Lai, chief investment officer at Nikko Global Asset Management. "But that can't last. No fundamental news is coming out." SHKP rose 4 per cent while Hutchison Whampoa, which accounts for a tenth of the weighting in the Hang Seng, rose 1.9 per cent.

FRANKFURT

TRADING was quiet with hopes of a further cut in US interest rates next week balanced by the prospect of disappointing company results. The Dax index closed 0.24 lower at 4639.65.

Metro, the store group, gained 6.70 marks to 116.40 marks after announcing a reorganisation.

Thyssen rose 10.05 marks to 295.55 marks following a modest 0.5 per cent rise in profits and Hoechst jumped 6 per cent to 76 marks in anticipation of good figures.

MAIN MOVERS

RISES

	PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG
Biocompatibl	123.50	22.50	23.50
Oxford Instr	201.00	33.50	20.00
BICC	66.50	9.50	16.70
Micro Focus	119.00	11.50	10.79
Booker	88.50	8.50	10.56
Lorien	158.50	14.50	10.10
PIC Intl	89.50	8.00	9.36
Heatlian	249.00	20.50	8.97
House of Fra	73.00	6.00	8.96
Premier Oil	25.50	2.00	8.51

FALLS

	PRICE(P)	CHG(P)	%CHG
Cornwell Par	74.00	-17.50	-18.10
Beckitt & Co	980.00	-150.00	-14.30
Indep Insura	228.00	-32.50	-12.46
Baltod Overs	26.00	-2.50	-8.80
Meggitt	150.50	-12.00	-8.42
Maiden	295.00	-20.00	-7.02
Parrish	137.50	-8.00	-5.14
Firth Rixon	80.00	-5.50	-5.88
Swanson	16.75	-1.00	-5.63
Sidna	212.50	-12.50	-5.56

MARKET LEADERS

TOP 20 VOLUMES at 5pm

Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.	Stock	Vol.
Shell Transp-Reg	35.99m	Brit Telecom	10.62m	Tesco	8.64m	Cross Vynolls	5.90m
Brit Petroleum	28.01m	Vodafone	10.25m	BICC	7.07m	Reckitt & Colman	5.85m
Booker	22.69m	Guardian Royal	10.02m	BG	6.91m		
BTR	13.52m	Marks & Spencer	9.62m	Unilever	6.77m		
Blue Circle Inds	12.40m	Smithkline Beech	8.99m	Reuters	6.76m		
Lloyds TSB	10.71m	Natl Power	8.67m	Diageo	6.05m		

FTSE 100 INDEX

HOUR BY HOUR

Open	5449.0		11:00	5409.4	Down 39.6
9:00	5449.0	Up 0.0	12:00	5401.4	Down 47.6
10:00	5372.8	Down 76.2	13:00	5403.9	Down 45.1
			14:00	5402.7	Down 46.3
			15:00	5408.8	Down 40.2
			16:00	5425.0	Down 24.0
			Close	5453.2	Up 14.2

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES

INDEX-LINKED

PERPETUAL

SHORTS

LONGS

MEDIUMS

SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. Price reflects the official closing mid price. Sector movements are based on the FTSE-350. The yield is the latest 12 months declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptionals. Other details > Ex rights: x Ex-dividend. a Ex-all. s Suspended; p Partly Paid, no Nil Paid. Gilt Prices are Bloomberg Generics. Source: Bloomberg

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For help with the service, including the Portfolio facility, call the Help Desk on 0171-729-8298.
(TRS plc, London EC2A 4PJ). 0891 calls cost 50p per minute.

RECENT ISSUES

Stock	Price	Chg(p)
Kindred Media	48.5	0.0
Vocal-Cola Beverages	131.0	-4.0
Estimer Prop	153.0	0.0
ICC Computers	235.0	-8.5
JME Telecom	143.5	-2.5
Quantica	71.0	0.0
Salesdata	53.0	1.0

source: Bloomberg
www.bloomberg.com/uk

M&S non-executives must act now

JEREMY WARNER

There can be no clearer sign of rot beneath the surface than a boardroom row conducted in public

AS LIKELY AS NOT, Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman of Marks & Spencer, will this afternoon be settling down to one of his favourite pastimes – six-pack at side and dressed in his Manchester United strip, he'll be heckling the TV from the armchair as he watches his team play Blackburn Rovers on Sky Sport.

Meanwhile, back at the office, it is to be hoped that the company's six-strong panel of non-executive directors has finally begun to address with the degree of urgency required the humdinger of a row that has broken out between Sir Rick and his deputy chairman, Keith Oates. This is what non-executives are paid to do, and if they have failed so far to deal with the breakdown in corporate governance which has brought this situation about, they need to make up for it now with decisive action.

Best managed, most respected, best customer service, best investor relations – the accolades heaped on M&S over the years are almost endless. It is often said that in business it takes years to build a reputation, 24 hours to lose it. M&S is hardly a busted flush yet, but there can be no clearer sign of rot beneath the surface than a boardroom row conducted in public. That it should have been allowed to happen at a company as highly regarded as M&S almost defies belief.

M&S's non-execs include some top-drawer names from business and the City. There's Sir Martin Jacomb, chairman of the Prudential, Sir Ralph Robins, chairman of Rolls-Royce and Sir Michael Perry, a former chairman of Unilever. They must know what has to be done.

First, the pretender to the throne, Mr Oates. For his disloyalty and lack of judgement in allowing his bid for the top to be waged through the press, Mr Oates must be made to walk the plank. He'll no doubt be a loss to M&S, but his failure to disassociate himself from the public lobbying of non-executives conducted on his behalf has both unnerved employees and brought the company into disrepute.

Second, the present king, Sir Richard Greenbury. He should be made to split the roles of chairman and chief executive with immediate effect and lay down a clear retirement date no later than two years hence. Third, the chief executive's position. The non-executives should begin an urgent search for a chief executive from outside the group, but benchmarked against Sir Richard's favoured internal candidate, Peter Salsbury. If nobody better can be found within a three-month period, the job should by default go to him.

There is an alternative strategy. They could fire Sir Richard and appoint Mr Oates. It may be that the situation is indeed serious enough to justify such a nuclear response of this sort. But to admit this publicly by pressing the button would be high-risk indeed and therefore not be in the best interests of the company. The sooner non-execs act along the lines just outlined, the better, even if it does mean interrupting Sir Rick's football game.

ICI/Zeneca

ICI HAS declared itself interested in buying parts of Zeneca's specialty chemicals business, which was put up for sale this week with a price tag of anything up to £2bn. What singles this expression of interest out from the general run of merger and acquisition activity is that this business was until five years ago actually owned by ICI. There could hardly be a more vivid illustration of what my colleague Hamish McRae has called the age of the "velcro company" – a pull them apart and stick them together again orgy of corporate activity.

What's caused the phenomenon is growing pressure on managements to "focus" on particular activities. This pressure comes from two quarters. First and foremost, it comes from investors, who want to encourage focus as a way of making companies, the quality of their management, and the returns they achieve, more open to scrutiny and comparison. It is all too easy to obfuscate poor performance in a multi-business company.

But perhaps more important, the pressure comes from the market place. For many companies, the customer base is now a global one; managements that don't focus 100 per cent of their time on servicing it in the most competitive and cost-effective way can expect to fail.

So how did ICI get from point A, when it owned these businesses, to point B where it now wants to buy them again?

Zeneca, ICI's fast growing pharmaceuticals arm, was demerged from the main company in 1993, again, to use the jargon, to allow management to focus on core competences. Strangely, agrochemicals and specialty chemicals were demerged with it, the justification being that these businesses were closer to Zeneca than they were to ICI.

In point of fact, the real reason was to give Zeneca some extra bulk. ICI shouldn't have bothered. Since then Zeneca's stock market value has risen and risen and ICI's has, well, sunk and sunk. Today Zeneca is worth more than five times as much as the old rump ICI business. More alarmingly, ICI is now worth only 80 per cent of what it paid Unilever for its specialty chemicals division a year and a half ago. Unilever sold, again in the name of focus, so that it could concentrate on its consumer product interests. At ICI, the idea was to transform the group from a low-margin bulk chemicals company into a higher-margin specialty chemicals concern.

Plainly the strategy hasn't worked. At Unilever, Niall Fitzgerald is laughing all the way to the bank. Meanwhile ICI's Charles Miller Smith is sinking under a mountain of debt, apparently unable to match what it paid Unilever with the promised asset disposals in bulk chemicals and elsewhere. Sensing ICI's distress, potential buyers, to the extent that there are any for these interests, are holding out for fire-sale prices.

In ICI's case, then, the velcro has failed to connect. So what on earth is ICI doing trying to buy Zeneca's specialty chemicals? Some of these businesses, resins in particular, fit the strategy alright, but the truth of the matter is that Mr Miller Smith has barely enough money to keep paying the dividend, let alone go on another shopping spree. Because of the history, ICI still has pre-emption rights over some of these businesses, but it is hard to see how it can afford to exercise them.

Footsie holds up well in a blitz of downgrades

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

A DOWNGRADING BLITZ hit the stock market. Analysts cut their profit estimates for a wide range of companies, from engineers to retailers. And for good measure, there was another crop of company profit warnings, including one from Footsie constituent, **Reckitt & Colman.**

The household products group was the worst performing Footsie share, tumbling 150p to 900p after reporting a sales slowdown. Its discomfort spread to Unilever, off 12p to 630p.

The downgrades included **Abbey National, Arjo Wiggins Appleton, BTR and Next.**

Abbey, up 12p at 1,179p, had to contend with Merrill Lynch lowering its estimates from £1.56bn to £1.53bn and from £1.7bn to £1.68bn. But the investment house retained its buy advice, putting a 1,300p target price on the shares.

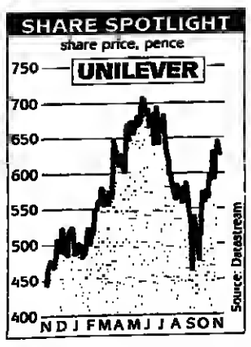
AWA, the packaging and paper group, was a victim of Charterhouse Tilney. The shares shaded 2.5p to 112p as Charterhouse moved from Maclellan (Albert E Sharp) and computer group MSB International (Merrill Lynch).

BTP, the speciality chemical group, lost 21p to 379.5p as BT Alex.Brown turned more cautious, and Tarmac lost 3.25p to 103.75p as Salomon set an 80p target.

Elsewhere, **Independent Insurance,** down 32.5p to 229p, warned of a £15m bad weather hit and **Cornwell Parker,** a furniture and fabrics group, slumped 17.5p to 74p on a trading warning. **Meggitt,** the engineer, fell 12p to 130.5p following the loss of its flagship flight display contract with Boeing.

Footsie, helped by New York, stood up relatively well to the battering. It closed 14.2 points higher at 5,463.2, although trading was thin. The supporting indices were mixed. The mid cap fell 18.8 points to 4,826.4 and the small cap nudged a 1.4 gain to 2,067.1.

Flat figures from John Lewis and a negative retail review from Panmure Gordon ruffled many retailers. **Marks & Spencer,** still embroiled in a row over the appointment of a new chief executive, fell 22p before rallying to end unchanged at 448p. **J Sainsbury** was cut 3p to 530p after Schroders offered a reduce recommendation.



BICC, the cable and constructioo group, was a star performer. The arrival of the aggressive asset specialist Wassall, with a 7.35 per cent stake, pushed the shares 9.5p higher to 66.5p. Whether Wassall will attempt a bid or is merely seeking to smoke out a possible predator remains to be seen. Many believe BICC should be split, freeing the construction side from the troublesome cables division. Earlier this week Hendersoo Crosthwaite estimated a break-up value of 120p.

Oils continued to draw strength from the Gulf crisis. **Shell** flared 10.25p to 364.75p and **British Petroleum** 16.5p to 916p. **Lasmo** edged ahead 4.5p to 178p and **Enterprise** 9p to 404p.

Bilton, as **Slough Estates** emerged victorious, put on 8p to 306.5p and Slough slipped 5.5p to 281.5p.

Capital Radio failed to make any lasting response to bid speculation. At one time up 32.5p, the shares shaded 1p to 561.5p. A suggestion that Scottish Media is looking to mount a £500m bid prompted the early excitement.

GRE, the Guardian Royal Exchange insurance group, which rose in late trading on Thursday, fell back 11p to 281p. **Warburg Dillon Read** did not help by reducing its profits forecasts. The failure of a bid to materialise lowered **Burn Stewart Distillers** 1p to 18p.

The hard-hit cash-and-carry chain **Booker** enjoyed some bottom fishing, rising 6.5p to 68.5p and **Express Dairies** responded to positive comment, up 9p to 164p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 726.9m
SEAQ TRADES: 54,057
GILTS INDEX: n/a

PROTEUS International, the health care group, edged ahead 3p to 39p as Nomura, the Japanese investment group, picked up 5 million shares from Protens founders Kevin Gilmore and John Poole. The deal lifted the Japanese interest to 7.23 per cent. The founders now have 6.76 per cent.

Proteus shares touched 83.5p earlier this year and once reached the heady heights of 365p.

RANK, the troubled leisure group where profits have tumbled and break-up maranders circle, edged forward 5.5p to 254.5p. A bid of £900m for the leisure division has been, it is believed, rejected. Investment honse Robert Fleming Securities calculates the break-up value of Rank shares at 330p. It believes the price should move nearer to 330p as corporate activity begins to unfold.

The streets with a high price tag

THREATS OF an impending recession do not appear to have deterred British shoppers, writes **Simon Duke.** According to a survey published yesterday, London's Oxford Street now ranks as the third most expensive street in the world for shops.

Retail rents have soared by 25 per cent during the past year, and now average £3,030 per square metre. Only New York's Madison Avenue (£3,566) and Hong Kong's Causeway Bay (£3,515) are more expensive.

Neither have the Russians let impending financial meltdown get in the way of conspicuous consumption. Moscow is now rated the fifth costliest place to shop in the world.

Reckitt warns of slowdown

BY CLIFFORD GERMAN

RECKITT & COLMAN'S sales have slowed in the last three months and will not now meet the 5 per cent growth target for the current year, the company warned yesterday. Launch costs in Europe for new products, including Dettox lavatory cleaner, Harpic Two-in-One blocks, and Woolite laundry aids, will also hit profits.

Reckitt had made disappointing profits of £152.4m for the six months to 4 July, well below stock market forecasts. Analysts immediately scaled back profit forecasts for the year from £230m to £295m-£300m, compared with last year's £299m, and the shares fell in line with the forecasts, closing 150p lower at 900p.

Trading in Europe, South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and Australasia is on target, but sales have fallen in East Asia and Latin America, which account for about 20 per cent of group turnover.

Sales in North America, which accounts for a third of total turnover, have also taken a knock from the introduction of "efficient consumer response," the retail equivalent of just-in-time delivery. ECR is sweeping North America, leading to sharp falls in retail stock requirements.

The US economy is healthy and the market shares of Reckitt's brands, which include Disprin, Lemsip and Cherry Blossom as well as Airwick, Harpic and Mr Sheen, remain strong, but Reckitt's like-for-like sales will grow by under 2 per cent this year, the company admitted.

Bigger rivals, including Unilever and Procter & Gamble, have also been affected by ECR, which is expected to spread right across the US market. Unilever shares shed 20.5p to 621.5p.

IN BRIEF

US and Japan in trade stalemate

TRADE TENSIONS between the US and Japan flared up yesterday in a dispute that threatens to overshadow next week's Asian-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) summit.

Three days of trade talks between senior Apec officials ended without agreement after Japan refused to promise early cuts in tariffs on fish and forestry products. Apec ministers will now meet over the weekend to try and resolve the dispute. If they fail, the issue will be taken up by Apec leaders at their November 17-18 summit.

Lloyd's fine

LLOYD'S OF LONDON has fined and banned one of its managing agents after finding the firm guilty of 12 separate breaches of accounting by-laws.

Cuthbert Heath Underwriting was fined £125,000 and ordered to pay £90,000 in costs to Lloyd's after failing to disclose information and keep certain accounting records.

Glasgow jobs

RESPONSE HANDLING, a database management company, is to create 200 jobs in Govan, Glasgow, as it expands a call centre next to Ibrox stadium. The expansion follows significant new contracts for the company.

Lonrho investors threaten legal action

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

THE BATTLE between Lonrho Africa and a group of investors linked to George Soros took a fresh twist yesterday when the shareholders threatened legal action against the troubled conglomerate.

Blakeney Management, an investment fund seeking an overhaul of the Sub-Saharan group's board, claimed that the company had made defamatory remarks against some of its associates.

Blakeney, which owns around 9 per cent of Lonrho Africa, said its legal advisers had been instructed to take further action over comments made by the company in a circular to shareholders, analysts' presentations and a public statement on Thursday.

The remarks related to Miles Morland, Blakeney's chairman, John Jackson, chairman of leisure group Ladbroke, and Dekel Golan, chairman of African Plantations, an African company.

The three are Blakeney's candidates to replace Lonrho Africa's non-executive directors at a shareholders' meeting on December 10.

In the circular to shareholders, the company had questioned the three men's experience of working in Africa.

Blakeney, together with fellow fund African Lakes, where one of the Soros funds has a stake, wants to shake up the board and radically change the company's strategy.

The two funds want to break up the hotels-to-agriculture business, recently spun off from Tiny Rowland's mining group, by selling underperforming parts.

A spokesman for Lonrho Africa dismissed Blakeney's threats as "absolute puffery".

SPORT

Rugby Union: Wales' new coach faces his first taste of competitive action against formidable South Africa today

Henry's experiment with reality

BY CHRIS HEWETT

IT WILL, of course, be entirely ridiculous, not to say blasphemous, to worship Graham Henry as the Great Redeemer should he inspire his red-shirted flock to a first-ever victory over the Springboks at Wembley this afternooo. He would be worthy of a title far more grandiose; God would sound about right. After all, this small, dapper, middle-aged New Zealander has been asked to create a whole new world from the dark void known as Welsh rugby and while no one quite expects him to complete the job inside seven days, instant success would ensure one heck of a Sabbath tomorrow.

Not that Henry is wholly sold on the Welsh Rugby Union billboard campaign that, even before his first Test in charge, has taken the liberty of portraying him in a distinctly celestial light: "Anything to get the crowd singing, I suppose," was his less than enthusiastic response this week. Twenty-eight years of the richest coaching experience the game of rugby union has to offer has taught the six-figure-salaried messiah that it will take more than a piece of advertising smart-arsery to tempt the choirs of hill and valley back into full voice.

It is difficult to sing anything more uplifting than a funeral dirge when your once proud nation has lost its last two major Test matches by an aggregate score of 147-13, and Henry makes no secret of his displeasure at the fixture schedulers who contrived to award him an international coaching debut against the very world champions who stuck 96 excruciating points on his new employees less than five months ago.

'All I want is some real passion, some real guts and for the players to do the things they've been told to do'

"What we really needed was a couple of rehearsals," he said after a squad session at Cardiff's Sophia Gardens, just a well-struck Neil Jenkins kick away from the site of the new Millennium Stadium, centrepiece of next year's World Cup extravaganza. "Believe me, the Springboks are no one's idea of a rehearsal. If anyone represents stone-cold reality, they do."

The reality for the 52-year-old former schoolteacher from Auckland is that his 10-week honeymoon with the Welsh public could be history by 4.30 this afternoon. Another humiliation, inflicted on something bearing a far closer resemblance to a full-strength Red Dragon outfit than the rag, tag and bobtail lot saddled with Mission Impossible to Pretoria last summer, would remove some of the Henry sheen for sure. The new coach can talk as good a game as the next man, but this is no time to be shouting the odds.

"I always go into a game expecting the ultimate because any coach who doesn't do that should get the hell out," he asserted before leaving for Londoo on Thursday. "But your definition of the ultimate is governed by your particular circumstances. I think we've made a good deal of progress together since I took over the joh in August, hut I can't hope to understand the exact scale of the task without watching the blokes play. A first-up game with the Boks is oot exactly what I'd have chosen but at least I'll get an idea of our deficieocies.

"All I want from this weekend is some real passion, some real guts and for the players to do the things they've been told to do. Total commitment, total concentration. That's the deal. I can't quantify what I'm looking for from this game in terms of points oo the board, or even in terms of victory and defeat. Perhaps that's why I'm nowhere near as nervous, as cranked-up, as I usually get hefore a hig one. There's an excitement inside me, of course – it's my first international match, the realisation of a dream I've cherished for nearly 30 years – hut to be honest with you, I'm generally in a far worse state than this."

For all his generalisations, his understandahle reluctance to talk specifics at so early a juncture, ooe or two illuminating truths can be drawn from Henry's first selection. If his predecessor, Kevin Bowring, attempted to "Welshify" the national team by reinstating the bold attacking traditions of the long lost Edwards-John-Bennett era, Henry is trying to "worldify" it with a dash of international *realpolitik*.

Quicksilver, imaginative, mercurial whippets like Arwel Thomas and Gareth Wyatt have been thrown to the four winds. This Wales, Henry's Wales, is all about size and strength and physical presence... or at least, as near as he can get to it.

"You might see it that way, but I wouldn't necessarily agree that there is any particular philosophy attached to my team selection," he shrugged. "The way I look at it, a coach picks his best 15. Really, it's that simple." Which it quite obviously is not. If that were the case, any mug could do it. And Henry is not, by any stretch of the little grey cells, a mug.

He first turned to coaching while his playing career was still a going coocern – "I was a pretty average outside-half playing pretty average rugby down in Christchurch when it struck me that I'd go further off the field than I could hope to go on it" – and by 1971 he was in charge of the rough and tumble at Auckland Grammar School. He paid his dues with the local colts and student sides, earned his stripes with the provincial B team and finally took over the whole Eden Park shooting match in 1995, leading the Auckland Blues into the inaugural Super 12 competition the following year.

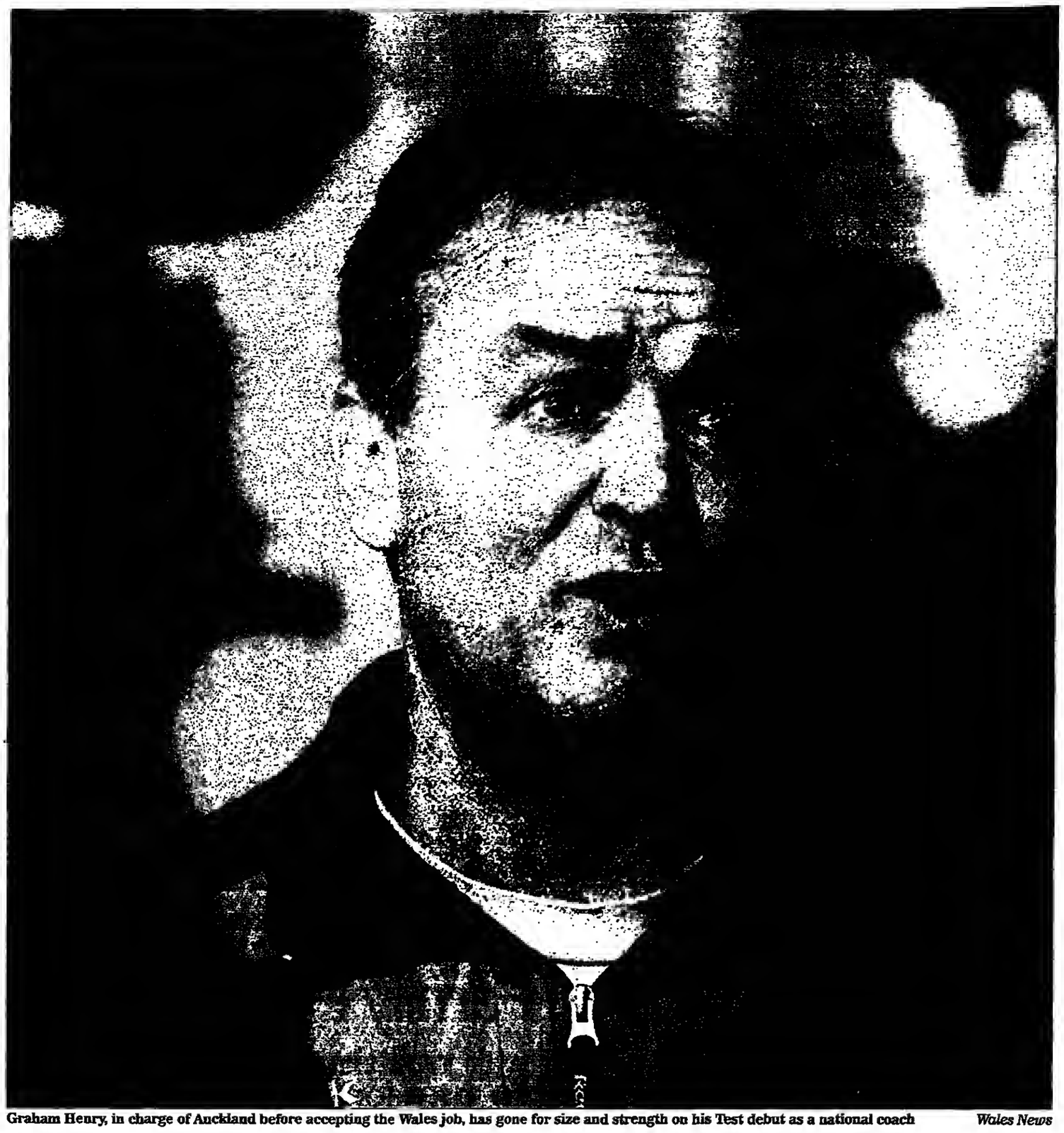
"You ask me whether coaching Auckland, with all those great players, was like falling off a log compared to Wales? Well, it was different, I'll admit. But it didn't run itself, that team. Some of the top guys were going down the far side of the mountain and had to be replaced and while we were introducing new blood, we always knew that the expectation, the assumption, that Auckland would win was constantly growing."

Auckland did win under Henry. They won heaps. In the 1996 Super 12 they scored 70 tries in 13 matches, at an average of more than five a game, and put 45 points on a vintage Natal side in the final. They triumphed in 1997, too, and it was not until this year's climax against Canterbury that they lost their first tournament game on home soil. Throw in the odd National Provincial Championship title and endless Ranfurly Shield defences and you bave a culture of achievement that could not be more dissimilar to recent Welsh experience if it tried.

Which is why England went after Henry in the summer of last year, only to cock up the negotiations so spectacularly that they became the laughing stocks of the northern and southern hemispheres simultaneously. Was Henry ever close to a Twickenham deal? The eyes narrow suddenly: "I spoke to one or two of the English top hrass, that's about all," he says. "I don't think we need go into it further."

OK, OK. What about the decision that *did* bring him to these islands, then? The word in New Zealand has it that with the All Blacks going down five-zip to Australia and South Africa during the summer, a brief pause for thought would surely have seen John Hart heading for the joh centre and Henry on the All Black throne. There go those eyes again: "Maybe, maybe not. Who knows what would have happened? I certainly don't. I wanted to coach at international level and Wales gave me a wonderful opportunity. I'm here and I'm in for the long haul. It's an extraordinary, exeiting challenge. I couldn't be happier."

And the folks back home in New Zealand? How happy are they at the loss of a world class coach? Henry is back on *terra firma* again, smirking mischievously out of the side of his mouth: "I've got friends back home and I can tell you that they've both wished me well for the game." A self-deprecating Aucklander, eh? Wonders will never cease.



Graham Henry, in charge of Auckland before accepting the Wales job, has gone for size and strength on his Test debut as a national coach *Wales News*

FOUR REASONS WHY THE BOKS ARE THE BEST

THE FORT KNOX FACTOR

If defence constitutes 50 per cent of a game, mega-tacklers like Henry Honiball and Andre Venter (above) are 100 per cent committed to making a proper job of it. The hardest side in the world to break down – astonishingly, they shipped only four tries in as many Tri-Nations games against the talented attacks of Australia and New Zealand – they have long subscribed to the view that it is very difficult to lose if the opposition fails to score.

THE EDUCATED RIGHT BOOT FACTOR

Last year's unexpected defeat by the Lions was based squarely on the fact that no Springbok goal-kicker could hit an elephant's backside with a double bass. Since when, Percy Montgomery (above) has brushed up on his marksmanship and started slotting them from everywhere. The Western Province full-back's tactical kicking has also emerged as a smart weapon; when in doubt he simply hoofs it downfield and leaves the rest to his tacklers.

THE ENLIGHTENED LEADERSHIP FACTOR

The big, strong, talkative one is Nick Mallett; the big, strong, silent one is No 8 Gary Teichmann (above). Together, they hit every spot that needs hitting. Coach Mallett is tuned-in, clued-up and proudly unbeaten: the very antithesis, indeed, of his ineffectual predecessor, Carel du Plessis. Under Mallett's tutelage, Teichmann present has managed to become the very antithesis of Teichmann past. A baffled captain a year ago, he now knows all the answers to all the questions.

THE RUGBY WITH ATTITUDE FACTOR

The Bokke psyche does not have an edge to it, it has a precipice. James Dalton (above), the tourists' first-choice hooker, used to be one of the two most competitive players in Test rugby and now that Sean Fitzpatrick has called it a day, the Transvaaler with the Yul Brynner hairstyle is out there on his own. The South Africans rarely fight these days – at least, not physically – but the old assumption of superiority, the divine right syndrome, still runs deep.

Intriguing philosophy of infinitely deferred effort

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

FOR A reason I choose not to dwell on, words spoken by a young man in a television documentary about health and fitness have lodged in my mind.

Asked about his ample gut, be patted it gently, grinned, and replied: "It's only temporary." Optimism – you have to admire that in a person.

I would be prepared to lay money that the contour in question is the same to this day, if not more pronounced. After all, its owner did not look remotely abashed.

But then why sbould be have done? Because he was clearly confident, like the smoker or the drinker, that he could just say "no". At any time, he could choose to deploy diet and/or exercise against the offending protuberance. It was simply that that time had not yet arrived.

For many, that time never will arrive – but with a little mental dexterity, as demonstrated by our young interviewee, the moment of truth can be postponed indefinitely. This does not mean, of course, that other persons need be viewed in the same indulgent light. At Anfield once, I heard a visiting supporter aim a torrent of abuse at Liverpool's portly Danish midfielder, Jan Molby. The phrase 'you fat bastard!' formed the central plank of this critique – which came from a man of, conservatively, twice Molby's girth.

It is one of the enduring attractions of football spectating that shouting out rude remarks is not just tolerated, but expected. Where else is there such freedom to voice personal insult? But to return to the man with the gut and the hazy plan. The fact is, I feel endangered by his philosophy. Those honeyed words, with their promise of infinitely deferred effort – I can sense them drawing me in, sapping my resolve...

I mean, even the super-fit have problems with motivation, doo't they? Dave Bedford, Britain's former world 10,000 metres record holder, once said that the biggest problem he faced in running was getting out of the front door.

I take some comfort from the fact that I have at least one thing in common with a world record hol'er. But it is not enough.

As I find myself confirming that old Bob Hope gag about middle age being the time when your age goes round your middle; as I find myself making Victor Meldrew noises while sinking into the depths of an armchair; as I find myself besitating to lean down and pick up the wax crayon so thoughtfully wedged under the cooker by, probably, my six-year-old – at all these times, I have a sensation of slipping away from something. Youth.

That's the something.

What I could do with, increasingly, is a kind of reverse inertia reel belt – one that would precipitate me from my seat in response to prolonged inactivity.

It's not that I have an exaggerated idea of physical attainment. The increasing numbers of men's bealth magazines promising to shape up my pecs or get my six-pack sorted for the summer do not hold any sway over me. At an official dinner recently I discovered a fellow journalist on my table who worked for one of these periodicals and suggested that he and his ilk were trying to make us chaps feel guilty in the same way that women's magazines had been doing with women for so many years.

Not a blindingly original point of view, I grant you, but at that stage of the evening it passed for conversation. And the object of my righteous indignation was sensible enough to agree before tucking gloomily into his roast potatoes.

No. I am no seeker after six-packs. Unless they have ring pulls, you can keep them.

But, but... a mixture of vanity, suspicion and, perhaps, instinct compels me make the occasional gesture towards general fitness. So it was that I decided the other day, on impulse, to go out for a run. Yes, just like that, out the front door, wearing what I wore.

By the time I reached the end of my road, heavy drops of rain had begun to fall, splodging darkly on to the pavement. I remembered that I had worn a small hole in the trainers I was wearing. Ah, yes – there it was.

Generally speaking, I view joggers in the rain with faint disdain, reasoning that they are being showily masochistic – "look at me, aren't I dedicated?" Now, as the traffic swished by on the main road, I was the sad and sodden toiler. But there was nothing else for it – I had committed myself.

Fully quarter of an hour later I returned to my front door, the front door I should have remained inside. My heart was pounding, blood thudded in my temples. But this I knew – it was only temporary.

Messing about with books

Historical Rochester, beloved of bibliophiles, has two claims to fame: the Medway and Charles Dickens. By Guy de la Bedoyere

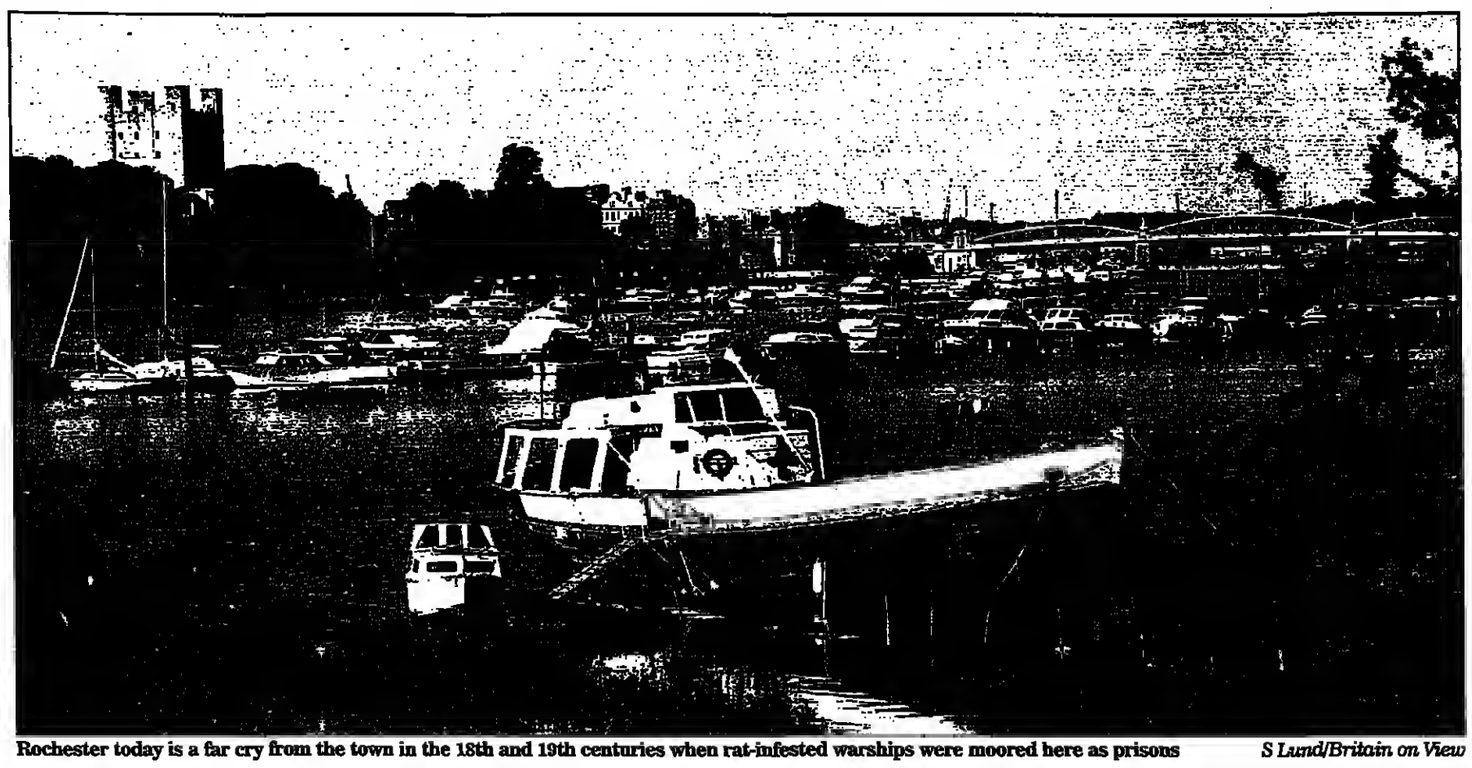
If your idea of paradise is a an endless parade of second-hand booksbops, junksbops and museums, all within easy walking distance, then Rochester is the place for you. And unlike most of Britain's other large towns with a past, it isn't swarming with shoppers and winter tourists.

Rochester is a genuinely interesting place which retains much of its ancient feel. However, I must confess to a mild personal interest bere. My great-great-grandfather was Bishop of Rochester between 1877 and 1890. As children, we were wheeled off in the late-Sixties to view his cathedral.

Once a walled, Roman city, old Rocbester has barely expanded beyond its medieval boundaries – though it has merged seamlessly with Gillingham and Chatham. The centrepiece is the old High Street, now pedestrianised apart from access for deliveries. It's a tumbling cascade of eclectic emporia, many of which milk the Dickens connection for all it's worth (he used to live nearby and many of his greatest stories use images from the area).

The best place to begin a wander round town is at the free museum attached to the glorious 17th-century Guildhall, built in 1687. In bere, you'll find pieces that reflect pretty much all of Rochester's history, including room interiors and the council chamber. The most interesting bit is the skillfully recreated prison bulk, using a small portion of deck and an array of mirrors. It's a reminder that this wbole area was once a naval centre.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, rat-infested, rotting and reeking wrecks, once great men-o'-war, were moored bere to bouse prisoners from wars and from London's crime-ridden streets. Some of the inmates produced the most extraordinary models and artefacts made from bone while they waited for transportation to the colonies. The sbeer horror and brutality is difficult to imagine. It's all a far cry from the Rochester of today, which is positively fun-filled in comparison.



Rochester today is a far cry from the town in the 18th and 19th centuries when rat-infested warships were moored here as prisons *S Lund/Britain on View*

Just past the Guildhall is the fabulous Baggin's Book Bazaar, which claims to be the largest second-hand bookshop in Britain (not an unusual claim, it has to be said, but this is big enough to be close to the truth). The modest shop front belies its meandering corridors of low ceilings, strip lights and shabby shelves. The stock is pbenomenal but, like a lot of Rochester's shops, slightly too pricey to allow unlimited impulse buys. Content is mostly local history with travel and literature upstairs at the back, and history, geograpby, science, biography and novels downstairs.

There are plenty more bookshops, though none of them are anything like as big. Some of the other shops offer a strange mix of potpourri, dolls, cards, stripped-pine furniture and a liberal scattering of slightly chipped Victorian meat plates. In between them are ordinary greengrocers and clothes shops. I prefer those which veer wildly between junk and antiques and where a 17th-century walnut armchair sits alongside a Forties Bakelite telephone and a pile of yellowing, Ian Fleming paperbacks.

One shop of bygones is a vast chamber with a bizarre window display of gas masks, chairs, battered dolls, brass fittings and clay pipes. Inside, rows of Edwardian tables and Victorian wardrobes are stacked with china, boxes, suitcases, glass and a selection of fragments from a Dornier bomber which crasbed nearby in the Second World War.

But Rochester wasn't founded to house antique and ephemera shops. It's bere because of the Medway, a buge tributary of the Thames, and once bome to Charles II's fleet. In 1667, the Dutch came up the Medway, burned the fleet and made off with the flagship, the *Royal Charles*.

At Rochester, the Romans founded a town called Durobrivae (a name which means "bridge-fort"). For centuries, the High Street was Watling Street, a great Roman highway from Richborough in Kent to London. In medieval times, it was the main road between London and Canterbury. The route was busy with a throng of travellers and one Richard Watts Esquire saw to it that the poorer among them could get lodgings. Look out for his bouse and its plaque which records that under his will, dated 22 August 1579, six travellers who could pay fourpence would be entitled to a a night's "lodging entertainment".

Long before, the Normans knew that Rochester's river crossing was very important so they built a colossal castle keep there, right over part of the Roman city wall. It is now open to the public, a huge pile of ragstone and cement with a vast internal void where wooden floors have rotted away. Climb to the top and from there you can look down on the diminutive Norman cathedral.

King John once laid siege bere and, in an especially repulsive turn of events, used pig carcasses to speed things up. He had a bole dug under one of the corner towers and stuffed it with dead pigs. These were then set on fire and the resultant implosion caused the corner of the castle to subside. Today, you can still see that one of the towers, later rebuilt, is quite different from the other ones.

Another king came here, too, but unlike John he was sad and incompetent. In 1688, William and Mary were invited to England to take the throne from the Catholic James II. He fled and spent his last night bere before he left England for ever on 23 December 1688. The bouse where he slept, appropriately called Abdication House, is now where the Lloyds Bank is located on the High Street.

There are plenty of more interesting buildings. Sir Cloudsley Shovell (1650-1707) was a city worthy (MP between 1698 and 1707). He rose to be admiral and commander-in-chief of the fleet in 1705, early in the reign of Queen Anne. Unfortunately, shortcomings in navigation skills of the age, which confounded an accurate calculation of longitude, contributed to his being shipwrecked on the Scilly Isles just after he had defeated the French fleet. The legend bas it that a local woman found him washed up on shore and killed him for his ring. There's a marvellous façade in the High Street, replete with teetering clock and plaque erected at Sir Cloudsley's "sole charge and expense" in 1706.

But, if any one person bas really captured the imagination of the good burghers of Rochester, it's Charles Dickens. This is unequivocally his town and that of his creations: Magwitch, Copperfield, and scores of other names that seem ludicrous if you think about them for long enough. He lived nearby at Gads Hill Place, a house later owned by the rather different creative figures of Rod Hull and Emu.

Every one of the Rochester bookshops has a Dickens section. The Dickens Centre itself is in a vast 16th-century brick and balf-timbered pile called Eastgate House, at the east end of the High Street. It features various talking beads and vignettes from the books in a tour of the great man's works. Not only that, but the bouse itself was featured by Dickens in *Pickwick Papers* as Westgate House and in the garden is a chalet that was used by the great man while be wrote *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* just before he died. With its dinky old shops and cobbled streets, perhaps even David Copperfield would still recognise Rochester.

The Dickens Centre is open daily from 10am, last admission 4.45pm: adults £3.50, children £2.50, family (two adults, two children, £9.50). Rochester Castle (English Heritage) is open daily, 10am-4pm (last admission, 3.30pm); adults £3.50, children £2.50. The Guildhall museum is open daily, 10am-5.30pm (last admission, 5pm); free

SIMON CALDER

How will Slobodan Cerovic promote his cause as Minister of Tourism for Serbia?

MUCH IN the travel industry is faintly ridiculous, which makes it such fun to work in. The coming week will see madness erupt in Earls Court, in west London, wben the annual World Travel Market takes place.

Among the imponderables at this year's frenzy of multinational networking: how the Gulf island state of Qatar, a new exhibitor, proposes to sell itself to the travelling public ("It's really not all that bad" is as enthusiastic as *Lonely Planet* gets). It will also be interesting to learn bow the Chilean tourist board will counter the current Foreign Office advice that travellers sbould avoid the country "unless on esseotial business". But most importantly, I want to bear what Slobodan Cerovic will be saying to promote his cause as Minister of Tourism for Serbia.

Many of us have happy memories of visiting the republic before the collapse of Yugoslavia. Mr Cerovic is leading a delegation of senior tourism figures seeking to reawaken our interest in Serbia – "despite the problems affecting UK tourism this year due to the crisis in Kosovo", according to the press release put out by the PR company that has beeo hired for the event.

I look forward to asking Mr Cerovic and his colleagues if it is appropriate to promote tourism in a country which, even by the normally unchallenging standards of international diplomacy, is a pariah because of its actions against its neigbbours and minorities.

THE OTHER big travel event on Monday is the flattening of the lumpy travel-ageocy playing field. For years, many travel agents' windows have been filled with posters offering discounts of 10 per cent or more on bolidays. From next week, all that could change. The Government has ordered travel agents to end the practice of tying discounts to the purchase of overpriced insurance.

The Department of Trade and Industry promised cbeaper bolidays as a result of this new rule. For the average package, that is unlikely to bappen; most customers will end up paying the same for the boliday-plus-insurance package. The big travel agents are planning to give insurance away with bolidays, instead of offering a big discount.

The benefit for consumers is that they will be able to compare prices without having to take convoluted insurance calculations into consideration.

Those who are likely to be worse off are the same group who found the "discount only with insurance" position so irritating: holders of annual policies. Before, they had to get double insurance cover in order to get a discount; now, they will likely be offered free insurance even if they don't want it. There is pleoty of room for an agent wbo is prepared to offer a straight discount with no strings attached and no unwanted add-ons.

WE MAY also get to benefit from less comprehensive travel insurance policies. Less cover, not more, can be a blessing for travellers who are not inclined to make fraudulent claims. Some industry estimates suggest that six of every 10 claims for lost or stolen possessions are bogus (I was appalled to meet a traveller on the road who proudly told me that his rucksack bad "been 'stolen' three times so far").

In the absence of a box on policy application forms saying "Do you intend to make any fraudulent claims? Tick yes or no", all we can do is opt out of that part of the insurance policy altogether; there is a cogent argument that the real value of travel insurance resides solely with emergency medical treatment and repatriation costs. So which brave broker or travel agent will sell me (or give away) such a no-frills policy?

NEXT TIME you fly from Heathrow Terminal Four, look for a sign opposite check-in desk 54. "British Airways Recovery Unit" it says, beside a kind of sentry box. Is it for passengers who have drunk too much or is it something to do with the next economic downturn?

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

Papillon too fleet for old warriors

By Richard Edmondson

IT IS time to put away childish things, the Flat-racing apparel of sunglasses and blazers. Now comes the real game, the National Hunt season of big men and even larger dry-cleaning bills.

Some believe that the jumps season begins only at the Hennessy Gold Cup at Newbury in a fortnight's time. Yet there is much to admire about Cheltenham's mud-spattering first serious meeting of the fresh campaign, highlighted today by the Murphy's Gold Cup.

The body of the Flat season may still be twitching, but the Prestbury Park executive has gone to considerable lengths to ensure racing's followers skip gaily across the bridge from one code to another.

The theme of today's card is an early skirmish between the British and Irish, a confrontation which reaches its ultimate conflict in these environs in March. The biggest Irish raiding party for a meeting other than the Festival has swarmed over, tempted both by useful prize-money if they win and funds even if they do not (travel incentives of £750 a horse have been splashing around).

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Papillon
(Cheltenham 2.55)
NB: Strong Chairman
(Cheltenham 3.30)

When it comes to winter racing, though, nothing sells the sport like the participants themselves. Red-faced trainers, who are either coloured by the dark morning starts or the medicines they take to survive them, will be interviewed, along with their jockeys, before start of play in the winners' enclosure. And then, of course, there will be the horses.

In the parade ring just before racing, spectators will be able to marvel at the past Murphy's Gold Cup winners Tipping Tim, Very Promising and Bradbury Star (a dual victor). About two hours later they can also witness two other horses who have won the race and remain in active service.

The Murphy's (or Mackeson to the old-stagers) was the launching pad last year for a horse trained just up the road at Smenham Farm, Icomb, on the fringes of Stow-on-the-Wold. Wilbur, as he is known is his yard, competes under the stage name of Senor El Betrutti and won this as well as Cheltenham's other early-season bauble, the Tripleprint Gold Cup, last season.

The grey, who is becoming milkier by the month, must now repeat his performance with an extra two stones in the saddle. "Senor El Betrutti is in excellent form," Susan Nock, his trainer, said yesterday. "He has schooled well and I am pleased with him.

"I walked the course on Monday and it looked in good shape so we are hopeful, even though we realise it will be difficult with so much more weight this time."

The runner-up 12 months ago was a gelding whose name provokes instant cheer and loathing among punters depending upon when you have backed him. If Russia had never existed it would have been Challenger Du Luc to which Winston Churchill referred to as "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma".

The eight-year-old frequently competes as if he is part of an equine care-in-the-community programme, throwing away victory in the most improbable of circumstances. Yet it must he remembered that he has consistent form in this race, as he also won it in 1997 with Richard Dunwoody in the saddle.

Tony McCoy's association with the Challenger has been conspicuously less fruitful and he switches to Martin Pipe's other runner, the progressive Cyfor Malta. Dunwoody is reunited with his old chum. Both, however, can be overlooked if you consider the recent record of their trainer. Pipe, as usual, is charging ahead in the jumps championship, but his strike-rate of late is not what we expect from the little man.

A more reliable selection could be a beast ill-named for the rigours of National Hunt racing. PAPILLON (nap 2.55), though, has already proved he is sturdier than his name might suggest by finishing second in an Irish Grand National. The seven-year-old has also won around this terrain and falls into the improving category which usually surrenders the Murphy's winner.

Elsewhere on the Cheltenham card there are possibilities about Strong Chairman (next best 3.30) and the Nigel Twiston-Davies-trained pairing of Ashley Muck (2.20) and Borazon (4.05).

Channel 4 also offers racing from Ayr and a particularly attractive limited handicap chase. By neat coincidence Sparky Gayle (1.45), last year's Murphy's favourite, has a chance in this. Among his rivals is Seven Towers, whose main target comes at the end of jumping's many feasts, in next spring's Grand National. The first drop of the real hard stuff is taken today. Enjoy.

Dobbin is lost in the country

IT WILL be of no consolation to Tony Dobbin, but if ever a jump jockey was to get confused by the configuration of a course it would be in the Sporting Index Chase, a cross-country encounter, that was held at Cheltenham yesterday, writes Richard Edmondson.

Dobbin appeared to have done the hard bit on McGregor The Third, safely negotiating the first circuit with no pathfinder to show him the way. But then, as the race hotted up and the pack closed, the young Ulsterman's compass went potty. He could have blamed McGregor, who has won this race twice before, and should therefore have been relied on to find his own way round.

On this occasion though the old horse went swerving to the outside of the main bunch and towards one avenue before his jockey realised everyone else was funnelling down another. By the time Dobbin had corrected his navigational error the field had gone. He recovered but could finish only fifth behind an Irish clean sweep led by Linden's Lotto and returned with a face as long as the race. The stewards punished the rider with a seven-day ban, which will come into force at the end of the month.

More consistently unreliable is Green Green Desert, who has been called more names than Elizabeth Taylor. However, the old scoundrel showed that talent is still mixing with waywardness inside his seven-year-old body yesterday in a handicap chase.

This itinerant racehorse, who has competed with distinction on the Flat and is now with Paul Nicholls after beginning his jumping career at Oliver Sherwood's yard, skipped pleasingly around two miles of the old course. He did not come under pressure at any stage, which was perhaps the key to his victory.

"Everything you read in the papers told you this horse had no chance," Nicholls said, "but the work he has done at home suggested he would win. I have been using him to lead the babies and he has settled in well."

■ Adrian Maguire has decided not to appeal against the three-day suspension which he collected at Kelso on Wednesday for using his whip with excessive frequency.

Runners clear the stepped hedge in the cross-country chase at Cheltenham yesterday which was won by Linden's Lotto Julian Herbert/Allsport

WINDSOR

HYPERION

12.30 Polar Champ 1.00 Wave Rock 1.35 Dancing Laird 2.10 Trouvaille 2.40 Gorman 3.10 Sweet Lord 3.40 Reverse Thrust

GOING: Good to Soft (Good on top loop).

■ Figure-of-eight course. Level, with sharp turns, and long straights and a 200yd run-in.

■ Course is N of town on A308 near junction 8 of M4. Stations at Windsor Central and Windsor Riverside 1m. River bus stops at course. ADMISSION: Club £14; Tattersalls £10; Silver Ring £4. CAR PARK: Third Ring, car with four occupants, £4, plus £2 at turnstiles; rest free.

■ LEADING TRAINERS: K Bailey 14-43 (32.6%), N Henderson 7-37 (18.9%), Miss H Knight 7-51 (13.7%), A Turnell 6-25 (24%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: M A Fitzgerald 9-47 (19.1%), J F Titley 8-45 (17.8%), A P McCoy 7-29 (24.1%), M Richards 7-66 (10.6%).

■ FAVOURITES: 80-221 (36.2%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: First Instance (2.10), 3.10 Grand Canyon (3.10).

12.30 3M INNOVATION NOVICE HURDLE DIV 1 (CLASS E) £3,500 added 2m

1 26-124 MERSEY BEAT (28) (D) G L Moore 4 11 5 M Batchelor (5)
2 0- ARTIC MIST (243) D O'Brien 7 10 12 W Greatrex (7)
3 COLOUR KEY (USA) (F32) P Hayward 4 10 12 S McNeill
4 EDAN HEIGHTS (F70) T Casey 8 10 12 W Marston
5 0-0 FARU (11) P R Webber 8 10 12 J Osborne
6 /814- MUSIC PLEASE (258) (D) S Preece 8 10 12 Mr H Ephgrave (7)
7 62P5- NEMISTO (176) Miss H Knight 4 10 12 R Johnson
8 PHOTOFIRST A Turnell 5 10 12 L Harvey
9 POLAR CHAMP (F25) N Gaselee 5 10 12 A Thornton
10 58P44/ PREMIER LEAGUE (F36) K C Brown 8 10 12 J R Kavanagh
11 0/55F- UPWARD SURGE (181) (D) R Ledger 8 10 12 Mrs N Ledger
12 SILVERY (F79) S Woodman 4 10 7 L Aspell
13 R SOVEREIN LADY (9) M Haynes 8 10 7 R Bellamy
14 TOASTED (F75) Miss E Lavelle 6 10 7 B Fenton
15 F5/ VALANDER (595) R York 7 10 7 Mr P York
– 15 declared –

BETTING: 6-4 Mersey Beat, 9-2 Nemisto, 7-1 Faru, 8-1 Edan Heights, Polar Champ, 12-1 Music Please, 14-1 Artic Mist, Photofirst, 16-1 others

FORM VERDICT

MERSEY BEAT is the obvious selection, particularly if there is no more rain. Edan Heights and Polar Champ are 70-rated Flat horses who are particularly interesting opponents.

1.00 MENCAP BLUE SKY HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,900 added 3YO 2m

1 8-16 BOLD KING (FR) (P115) Mrs L Jewell 11 5 D Leahy
2 P BALLYKISSANN (18) D French Davis 10 12 S McNeill
3 BROOKSIE (F200) R Curson 10 12 M Ahern
4 COURAGE UNDER FIRE (F23) D Arbuthnot 10 12 D Byrne
5 DAWN TREADER (USA) (F23) J S Moore 10 12 J A McCarthy
6 DISTINCT FLYER (F42) A Turnell 10 12 L Harvey
7 GI BLUES (F103) R Simpson 10 12 Mr J Owen (7)
8 2 MASTER CASTER (23) (BF) G McCourt 10 12 W Marston
9 PARK ROYAL (F23) P Butler 10 12 Mr S Strouge (7)
10 PETANE (F19) L A Dace 10 12 J J Best (7)
11 P0 RED BROOK LAD (14) S Dow 10 12 J Goldstein (5)
12 STILL WATERS (F64) K Bell 10 12 J R Kavanagh
13 23 WAVE ROCK (14) (BF) Miss H Knight 10 12 J Osborne
14 YAJTAHED (F18) G L Moore 10 12 R Johnson
15 PP0 ISABELLA (35) Miss C Caroe 10 7 C Webb
16 P LITTLE FOX (14) Mrs L Richards 10 7 M Richards
17 MISS SCOOTER (F151) M Muggeridge 10 7 D Creech (7)
18 MOTHERS HELP (F33) D Williams 10 7 R Walsley (3)
19 PERECAPA (F61) B Palling 10 7 B Fenton
– 19 declared –

BETTING: 15-8 Wave Rock, 11-4 Master Caster, 6-1 Yajtahed, 7-1 Bold King, 10-1 Courage Under Fire, 14-1 Distinct Flyer, 20-1 others

FORM VERDICT

There are possibilities about one or two of the newcomers, but this looks a good opportunity for WAVE ROCK. He was the pick of these on the Flat and, though he apparently went the wrong way, he has shown enough over timber to indicate he can hold his own in what is usually an ordinary race.

1.35 3M INNOVATION NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV II) £3,500 added 2m

1 0 BROWN LAD (FR) (14) Miss H Knight 5 10 12 J Osborne
2 023-4 CHICAGO CITY (16) J Gifford 5 10 12 L Aspell
3 5P230- COPPER SHELL (F81) Mrs L Jewell 4 10 12 D Leahy
4 4- DANCING LAIRD (340) K Bailey 8 10 12 R Walsley (3)
5 262-40 IMPALA (16) W G M Turner 4 10 12 J Power (7)
6 1/243- LIMIT THE DAMAGE (250) (D) J Whyte 5 10 12 J Goldstein (5)
7 5/ MISTER RIVER (604) D Elsworth 7 10 12 P Holley
8 4 MOONLIGHT INVADER (24) J Portman 4 10 12 A David
9 RUN WITH THE TIDE A Turnell 5 10 12 Mr C Rea
10 SHARPEST (F25) J S Moore 4 10 12 M Richards
11 THE POLYMATH (F833) P Channings 5 10 12 A Thornton
12 000/ MY LISA TOO (1323) A McNae 8 10 7 W Marston
13 PRINCESS EILEEN (F141) O O'Brien 4 10 7 M Batchelor (5)
14 3 SIDE BY SIDE (GER) (28) Mrs A E Johnson 6 10 7 R Johnson
– 14 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Chicago City, 4-1 Dancing Laird, 9-2 Copper Shell, 8-1 Side By Side, 7-1 Brown Lad, 8-1 Limit The Damage, 12-1 Impala, Run With The Tide, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

On the whole, the safest bet looks to be CHICAGO CITY, with the doubt about whether Brown Lad has taken to hurdles and whether Copper Shell will need another run.

2.10 BARCLAYS BANK THAMES VALLEY HANDICAP CHASE (D) £5,500 2m 5f

1 /021P- HIGH ALLTITUDE (226) (D) M Heaton-Ellis 10 12 0 W Marston
2 31U3-1 MILLCROFT RIVIERA (46) (D) R Alner 7 11 9 A Thornton
3 1F2-43 COLONEL BLAZER (29) (C D BF) Miss H Knight 6 11 0 J Osborne
4 2F5-F TOP NOTE (18) (D) J Gifford 8 11 1 L Aspell
5 22P11- SEYMOURSWIFT (205) D Gandolfo 8 10 9 S Wynne
6 0234-2 TROUVAILLE (21) (CD) A Turnell 7 10 0 R Johnson
7 P01P2/ ZAMBEZI SPIRIT (899) (C) (D) Mrs M Jones 9 10 4 D Byrne
8 U0123- FIRST INSTANCE (215) (D) O Grissell 9 10 0 B Fenton B
9 1P082- HIGHLAND FLAME (173) A Blackmore 9 10 0 E Husband
– 9 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True weights: First Instance 9st 5lb, Highland Flame 9st 8lb.

BETTING: 7-4 Millcroft Riviera, 7-2 Seymourswift, 9-2 Trouvaille, 7-1 Colonel Blazer, 8-1 High Altitude, 10-1 Zambezi, First Instance, 16-1 others

FORM VERDICT

The ground (more rain forecast) is likely to be against Millcroft Riviera and Trouvaille, and it should pay to concentrate on Colonel Blazer, Seymourswift and ZAMBEZI SPIRIT. The last-named, despite his win record, cannot be written off as a firm-ground specialist and, given his first-time-out record, there should be few worries about his fitness. The market has often proven a reliable guide to his prospects.

2.40 NESCAFE NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,500 added 2m 4f

1 0F1-12 MIGHTY PHANTOM (112) (D) R Phillips 5 12 0 J Osborne
2 43F-F2 GORMAN (11) Miss H Knight 6 10 12 Mr O Murphy (7)
3 3PF-6 QUITE LIVELY (14) K Bailey 8 10 11 R Walsley (3)
4 985P-1 SPICK AND SPAN (26) P Hedger 4 10 6 M Richards
5 0P230/ GRANBY BELL (F400) P Hayward 7 10 4 B Fenton
6 822P-5 LOTSCHBERG EXPRESS (9) (BF) O Gandolfo 6 10 3 S Wynne
7 /855-6 BRASSIS HILL (26) R Rowe 7 10 1 R Garritty
8 405F-4 CATHERINE'S WAY (16) (BF) A Turnell 8 10 0 L Harvey
9 300-35 DAUGHTER IN LAW (150) Miss C Caroe 5 10 0 C Webb
10 0-5085 CRESSWELL QUAY (14) P Bowen 5 10 0 W Marston
11 0-20F0 GUNNER SID (15) S Preece 7 10 0 Mr H Ephgrave (7)
12 D0P6-P LUDO'S ORCHESTRA (161) M Campion 7 10 0 P Holley
13 PPP- CLEMENS (241) O O'Brien 8 10 0 M Batchelor (5)
– 13 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Catherine's Way 9st 12lb, Daughter In Law 9st 11lb, Cresswell Quay 9st 7lb, Gunner Sid 9st, Ludo's Orchestra 8st 10lb, Clemens 7st 12lb.

BETTING: 3-1 Spick And Span, 7-2 Gorman, 9-2 Quite Lively, 6-1 Lotschberg Express, 8-1 Brassis Hill, Mighty Phantom, 10-1 Catherine's Way, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Few with serious chances. Mighty Phantom, suited by distance and going, could find the concession of 28lb to promising CATHERINE'S WAY (likely to come on for his reappearance) beyond him. Spick And Span could represent poor value, and Lotschberg Express looks the pick of the others.

3.10 RMC GROUP NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 3m

1 4325-6 IVORY COASTER (NZ) (21) S De Haan 7 10 12 J Osborne
2 5U35-3 MILLERSFORD (20) N Gaselee 7 10 12 A Thornton
3 4834U- SALISONG (239) J Whyte 9 10 12 Mr C Rae
4 0/0P-0 SARENACARE (107) S Dow 0 10 12 L Harvey
5 0260P- SWEET LORD (213) M Bradstock 7 10 12 P Holley
6 P14U4- TOMMY COOPER (374) Mrs B Waring 7 10 12 E Byrne
7 /5P31- TOUCHING DOWN (237) (D) C Morlock 8 10 12 J A McCarthy
8 PU/P-P TRANSCENDENTAL (20) (D) C Barwell 8 10 12 B Fenton
9 2P1-P CROSS RHODES (NZ) (21) (D) O Gandolfo 5 10 10 S Wynne
10 821-2P GRAND CANYON (10) (D) P Eccles 5 10 10 W Marston B
11 34P5-P ISLAND HARRIET (17) (D) J Fitch-Heyes 8 10 7 J Goldstein (5)
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Millersford, 4-1 Ivory Coaster, 6-1 Touching Down, 7-1 Sweet Lord, Cross Rhodes, Grand Canyon, 8-1 Salisong, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

An ordinary race in which the likely favourite Millersford, often his own worst enemy, is vulnerable to less exposed types. Pick of them could be SWEET LORD, who ran creditably first time out last term, when he looked quite useful over hurdles.

3.40 SOUTHERN ELECTRIC GAS HANDICAP HURDLE (E) £3,500 added 2m

1 2P80- DANCING PADDY (198) (D) K Cunningham-Brown 10 12 0 A Thornton
2 6423/0 SHOOFK (28) S Dow 7 11 8 J Osborne
3 F/8P-1 HOLY WANDERER (91) (D) T George 0 11 4 R Walsley (3)
4 P45-2 ABAJANY (F14) M Channon 4 11 9 D Byrne
5 311I5 MR SPECULATOR (36) (D) J Spearing 5 10 10 R Johnson B
6 34-P04 WAYFARERS WAY (22) (D) N Henderson 7 10 4 J R Kavanagh
7 122-35 STORM TIGER (10) (CD) (BF) S Mellor 7 10 3 C Webb
8 0-3203 DRAGON KING (10) C R Barwell 8 10 0 B Fenton
9 2F3/32 REVERSE THRUST (35) P Hedger 7 10 0 M Richards
10 5/-158 BIGWIG (72) (D) G L Moore 5 10 0 M Batchelor (5) B
11 1003-P CATEMPO (38) (D) G McCourt 8 10 9 R Studholme (5)
– 11 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Dragon King & Reverse Thrust 9st 12lb, Bigwig 9st 7lb, Catempo 9st 4lb.

BETTING: 7-2 Abajany, 5-1 Storm Tiger, 11-2 Wayfarers Way, 13-2 Holy Wanderer, Reverse Thrust, 8-1 Mr Speculator, Dragon King, 10-1 others

FORM VERDICT

A sound pace looks assured, and this should suit Holy Wanderer, ABAJANY, Storm Tiger and Wayfarers Way. The ground could be on the soft side for the first-named, while Storm Tiger seems in the grip of the handicapper. Wayfarers Way is on a good mark, but Abajany is relatively unexposed over hurdles and looks the one to be on.

MARKET RASEN

HYPERION

12.55 Tashreef 1.30 Good Vibes 2.05 Premium Quest 2.40 Shirley Venture 3.20 Danger Flynn 3.50 General Haven

GOING: Soft (Good to Soft back straight).

■ Right-hand, sharp, undulating circuit. Run-in of one furlong.

■ Course is E of town on A631. Market Rasen station (Lincoln - Grimsby line) 1m. ADMISSION: Club £13; Tattersalls £9 (OAP members of Jubilee Club half price); Silver Ring £5 (Jubilee Club OAPs half price). CAR PARK: picnic areas £2, rest free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

■ LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe — 22 winners from 93 runners gives a success ratio of 23.7%; Mrs M Reveley 16 from 97 (16.6%); Miss H Knight 13 from 40 (32.5%); Mrs B Smith 13 from 96 (13.5%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 30 wins from 78 rides gives a success ratio of 38.5%; N Williamson 21 from 89 (23.6%); L Wyer 16 from 83 (19.3%); A S Smith 16 from 141 (11.3%).

■ FAVOURITES: 209 wins in 592 races (35.3%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Soap Stone (2.05), Lovable Outlaw (visored, 3.20).

12.55 RACING CHANNEL CONDITIONALS H'CAP H'DLE (E) £3,000 2m 1f 110yds

1 01F3- CENTAUR EXPRESS (215) (CD) A Streeter 8 12 0 L Cocoran (3)
2 333-F DULAS BAY (21) M W Easterby 4 11 10 E Callaghan
3 213343 NON VINTAGE (28) (CD) M Chapman 7 11 8 H Oliver
4 36183P GLORIOUS ENCOUNTER (25) C Mann 4 11 4 J Magee
5 055-0P TALATHATH (FR) (32) (C) (D) J Curtis 8 11 4 G Lee B
6 00P-41 CASHAPLENTY (8) N Littmoden 5 10 0 Michael Brennan
7 R034-F MARIGLIANO (USA) (F14) K Morgan 5 10 9 R Massey
8 4RPR/2 TASHREEF (4) Mrs S Smith 0 10 0 G F Ryan
9 1/55-0 FAUSTINLUCE LADY (8) (D) W Smith 9 10 0 N Hannity (3)
10 500500 THE COTTONWOOL KID (15) Miss L Siddall 6 10 0 T Siddall V
– 10 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Marigliano 9st 10lb, Tashreef 9st 7lb, Faustinluce Lady 9st 1lb, The Cottonwool Kid 8st.

BETTING: 100-30 Cashaplenty, 7-2 Tashreef, 5-1 Centaur Express, Marigliano, 8-1 Non Vintage, 8-1 Dulas Bay, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Though he faces a tougher task this time, recent winner CASHAPLENTY may be able to win again. He is more reliable than form pick Tashreef and may well have a fitness advantage over the tempting Centaur Express.

1.30 CLUGSTON NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 4f

1 0/131- EL CORDOBES (215) Mrs J Buckley 7 11 8 L Cummins (5)
2 3/11-2 GOOD VIBES (21) (C) (BF) T Easterby 6 11 5 R Garritty
3 35/8P- KING PIN (287) (D) P Beaumont 9 11 5 B Grattan (5)
4 3/4PP- OVER THE CORRIB (270) J Curtis 6 11 5 G Lee
5 1140- SAD MAD BAD (F26) (C) Mrs M Reveley 4 10 5 Mr A Dempsey (5)
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-7 Good Vibes, 5-2 Sad Mad Bad, 8-1 El Cordobes, 20-1 King Pin, 33-1 Over The Corrib

FORM VERDICT

Chasing debutant SAD MAD BAD makes plenty of appeal. He was not that far behind main rival Good Vibes over hurdles and, crucially in ground which will make for a decent test of stamina, is much more of a likely stayer than Good Vibes, who is unproven at this longer trip.

2.05 CLUGSTON NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 3YO 2m 1f 110yds

1 ASPRILLA (F414) B Ellison 10 12 L Temple (7)
2 FURTHER RISK (F42) Mrs H Walton 10 12 Mr A Walton
3 4235 MAAZOOM (9) M Sowersby 10 12 M H Naughton (5)
4 6 NAJJAR (USA) (14) J FitzGerald 10 12 R Garritty
5 2 PREMIUM QUEST (5) R Fahey 10 12 E Callaghan
6 86 DANSEUSE ARGENTINE (FR) (11) F Jordan 10 7 G Tormey
7 GRACIE GREY Mrs S Lamyman 10 7 J Magee
8 HELENES HILL (F54) J L Harris 10 7 L O'Hara
9 R SOAP STONE (37) A Bailey 10 7 Mark Smith (7) B
10 TENDER TOUCH Miss K Milligan 10 7 G Lee
11 THREE TENNERS (F54) G A Harker 10 7 F Leahy
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 4-6 Premium Quest, 5-1 Maazoom, 7-1 Najjar, 10-1 Danseuse Argentine, 16-1 Tender Touch, 20-1 Three Tenners, Asprilla, 25-1 others

FORM VERDICT

A moderate race in which only form-pick PREMIUM QUEST, Najjar and possibly Danseuse Argentine rate serious contenders. Najjar's debut run did not yield any great promise, so Premium Quest is somewhat reluctantly preferred.

2.40 CONSORT TRAVEL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,500 2m 5f 110yds

1 1W/ ALZOOMO (924) J Glover 6 11 12 E Callaghan
2 4/4P4- IMAD (F81) (D) K Comerford 8 11 9 M Brennan
3 802/2- PRELUDE TO FAME (F195) Miss K Milligan 6 11 4 F Leahy
4 040-4 SHIRLEY VENTURE (21) (D) Miss V Williams 5 11 6 S Kelly (3)
5 4-P42P LAGAN (26) S Gollings 5 11 2 R Garritty
6 2321-6 SHAHRANI (F26) (C) M Chapman 6 11 1 W Worthington
7 64/43 STRONG JOHN (16) (C D BF) M Sowersby 10 10 4 M H Naughton (5)
8 /F-0P0 DOMINOS RING (16) Mrs H Walton 9 10 3 Mr A Walton
9 -15420 GAY GALANT (31) (BF) M Bielby 5 10 0 G Tormey
– 9 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Gay Galant 9st 9lb.

BETTING: 9-4 Shirley Venture, 8-1 Prelude To Fame, 8-1 Gay Galant, 7-1 Strong John, 8-1 Lagan, 9-1 Imad, 10-1 Alzoomo, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Several of these would ideally prefer faster ground, while fitness is also likely to be a major factor as the soft terrain taxes reserves. Though he has been running in sellers of late, the race-fit and fairly treated STRONG JOHN may be the answer, especially as conditions ought to be no problem for him.

3.20 CLUGSTON HANDICAP CHASE (F) £4,000 added 3m 1f

1 41/PP- CLAVERHOUSE (192) (C) J FitzGerald 0 12 0 R Garritty
2 1P1P-4 LOVABLE OUTLAW (85) (D) Miss M Rowland 7 11 12 Gary Lyons V
3 1210-5 DANGER FLYNN (21) (BF) Mrs P Sly 6 11 7 G Tormey
4 U2P3-U LAY IT OFF (155) J G O'Neill 8 11 6 R Massey (3)
5 1F82-0 DESERT BRAVE (15) Mrs S Smith 6 11 0 G F Ryan (5)
6 55234- RIVER BAY (193) (C) Miss H Knight 7 10 10 G Upton
7 2142-4 KARENASTINO (15) (C D) Mrs S Smith 7 10 5 R Wilkinson (5)
8 3043-P SILLARS STALKER (21) Mrs S Williamson 10 10 3 G Lee
9 6331-8 DEEL QUAY (14) (CD) Mrs J Buckley 7 10 0 F Leahy
10 4023/ CULLANE LAKE (549) Miss K Milligan 8 10 0 B Grattan (5)
11 55U32 WILLIE WANNABE (21) M Chapman 9 10 0 W Worthington
– 11 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Cullane Lake 9st 13lb, Willie Wannabe 9st 9lb.

BETTING: 4-1 Karenastino, 9-2 Danger Flynn, 5-1 Lay It Off, 5-1 River Bay, 7-1 Deel Quay, 10-1 Desert Brave, Sillars Stalker, Willie Wannabe, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

KARENASTINO has won here on soft and elsewhere at slightly farther so, unlike several of these, is proven in the conditions. With his yard in form and a fair, if well beaten, seasonal debut behind him, he is the choice.

3.50 PARK SOCIAL NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 2m 1f 110yds

1 2/316- AHRAYDOUBLEYOU (187) (D) Mrs S Smith 5 10 12 R Wilkinson (5)
2 4022- ARTIC GROUND (169) P Webber 8 10 12 Michael Brennan
3 404- CASUAL CALL (323) T Easterby 5 10 12 G Upton
4 30- CENSOR (F82) G A Harker 5 10 12 G Lee
5 00 COOLAMILL (20) O Brennan 5 10 12 M Brennan
6 DEE PEE TEE CEE (F65) M W Easterby 4 10 12 F Leahy
7 DRIVE ASSURED (F30) K Morgan 4 10 12 R Massey (3)
8 2 EXECUTIVE CHOICE (14) B Ellison 4 10 12 L Temple (7)
9 0P3- GENERAL HAVEN (336) M Sowersby 5 10 12 M H Naughton (5)
10 3-65 HELMSLEY FLIER (14) T Easterby 4 10 12 R Garritty
11 4 PROTOCOL (F7) Mrs S Lamyman 4 10 12 J Magee
12 SMART BOY (F23) M Bielby 4 10 12 E Callaghan
13 UNITUS (F37) M Chapman 5 10 12 W Worthington
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Ahraydoubleyou, Helmsley Flier, 9-2 Drive Assured, 13-2 Artic Ground, 7-1 Casual Call, 8-1 Censor, 9-1 Executive Choice, 12-1 Smart Boy, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

A difficult race for punters, in which the paucity of decent recent form over hurdles means extreme caution should be exercised. Fair Flat-racer DRIVE ASSURED is a tentative choice to make a winning debut over hurdles, possibly at the main expense of Artic Ground.

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

7.00 Tropical Beach 7.30 Facsimile 8.00 Just Name It 8.30 Soaked 9.00 Super Strides 9.30 Desert Spa

GOING: Standard. STALLS: 7f – outside; rest – inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: High best.

■ Fibresand, left-hand, oval course.

■ Course is N of town on A449. Wolverhampton station 1m. ADMISSION: Club £15; Tattersalls £8 (OAP members of Diamond Club £4); Viewing Restaurant £29.50 inc meal. CAR PARK: free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

■ LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead — 71 winners from 669 runners gives a success ratio of 10.6%; M Johnston 61 from 273 (22.3%); J Berry 51 from 348 (14.7%); P Haslam 40 from 231 (17.3%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: J Weaver 66 wins from 308 rides gives a success ratio of 21.4%; S Sanders 49 from 368 (13.3%); G Duffield 36 from 225 (16%); D Holland 35 from 165 (21.2%).

■ FAVOURITES: 444 wins in 1379 races (32.2%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Hil Rhapsody (8.30).

7.00 'NOWHERE TO RUN' HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,000 added 1m 100yds

1 005321 PIPE MUSIC (122) (D) P Haslam 6 10 0 L Charnock 11
2 450 YES KEEMO SABEE (140) B McMahon 3 9 13 V Halliday 10
3 03020 SPARKLING HARRY (26) (CD) Miss L Siddall 4 9 12 D McKeown 12
4 402601 TROPICAL BEACH (28) (CD) J Pearce 5 9 11 G Bardwell 4 V
5 005 FAR CRY (94) Sir M Prescott 3 9 11 G Duffield 6
6 419405 TIPOSI (87) J J Quinn 3 9 11 J Quinn 9
7 060662 ARC (28) F Jordan 4 9 11 R Perham 3
8 406300 ANONYM (14) (CD) C Allen 6 9 10 O Pears 6 B
9 026004 UP IN FLAMES (19) (C) (D) S Bowring 7 9 3 C Teague (3) 13
10 600020 HIGH NOON (15) N Littmoden 8 9 1 T G McLaughlin 1
11 143560 DRY LIGHTNING (15) M Bell 3 9 0 M Fenton 2
12 140500 BUNNIES OWN (15) J L Harris 3 8 12 R Winston (3) 0
13 200320 SHALYAH (46) N Littmoden 6 8 11 P Roberts (3) 7
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Far Cry, 9-2 Tropical Beach, 5-1 Arc, 5-1 High Noon, 16-1 Pipe Music, Sparkling Harry, 12-1 Up In Flames, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

UP IN FLAMES shaped promisingly on his return to action after a break at Leicester last month and gets the vote ahead of Arc, who is taken to reverse recent course placings with Tropical Beach.

7.30 SOUL MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (F) £2,800 3YO 1m 100yds

1 30-300 ABSALOM'S LAD (46) P Harris 8 9 A Culhane 10
2 006400 CUE MAN (26) O Shaw 8 0 S D Williams 3
3 000000 QUIZ MASTER (20) E Weymes 8 9 W Ryan 8 B
4 063056 THE IMPOSTER (113) D Murray Smith 0 0 G Duffield 11
5 0 ALWENA (53) B C Williams 8 6 D Williams (7) 2
6 630005 DEKELSMARY (26) J Balding 8 0 J Edmunds 8
7 2-4263 FACSIMILE (26) John Berry 8 8 Declan O'Shea 7
8 26 KAREFREE KATIE (8) M Johnston 8 9 Dean McKeown 9
9 0 PAPILLON SAUVAGE (23) W Muir 8 8 Dane O'Neill 1
10 434020 PREMIUM PRINCESS (22) J J Quinn 8 9 J Quinn 6
11 0 PRETTY ASH (24) A T Murphy 8 9 M Fenton 12
12 000 SILENT VOTE (22) S R Bowring 0 9 G Strange 4 B
– 12 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Facsimile, 4-1 Premium Princess, 9-2 Absalom's Lad, Karefree Katie, 8-1 Dekelsmary, 10-1 The Imposter, 12-1 Cue Man, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Karefree Katie has to be feared on her AW debut, but she could find one too good in FACSIMILE, who should be suited by tonight's trip and is taken to confirm the promise she showed over a mile at Warwick.

8.00 'BAND OF GOLD' MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2YO 7f

1 9 BALLYMORRIS BOY (30) J Pearce 0 0 R Price 10
2 622 JUST NAME IT (USA) (70) (BF) Sir M Stoute 0 0 W Ryan 1
3 0 LITTLE BOY BLUE (220) M Waring 0 0 F Lynch 2
4 00 MIKE SIMMONS (52) L Grassick 0 0 V Slattery 12
5 0 MIRAGGIO (8) H Morrison 0 0 S Drowne 0
6 8 TANTISPER (18) Mrs A Swinbank 0 0 L Charnock 7
7 0 TEAM OF THREE (8) D Shaw 0 0 S D Williams 8
8 00 THE LAST WORD (18) R Hollinshead 9 0 A Culhane 5
9 64 TIGER SHARK (18) Lord Huntingdon 9 0 Dean McKeown 6
10 0 TROIS ELLES (7) R Spicer 0 0 M Fenton 6
11 50 PHYLOZZO (43) P Evans 9 0 F Norton 11
12 03 SOVEREIGN ABBEY (19) Sir M Prescott 8 9 G Duffield 4
– 12 declared –

BETTING: 4-6 Just Name It, 3-1 Tiger Shark, 9-2 Sovereign Abbey, 18-1 Tantisper, 25-1 Miraggio, Team Of Three, Trois Elles, 33-1 others

FORM VERDICT

JUST NAME IT is clearly nothing special, but he should be good enough to break his duck in this company and is taken to score from Sovereign Abbey.

8.30 'JIMMY MACK' HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,750 added 5f

1 010400 SOAKED (28) (D) O Chapman 5 10 0 A Culhane 6
2 1R0000 RUSSIAN ROMEO (51) (C) B McMahon 6 9 12 D McKeown 7 B
3 132000 RISKY WHISKY (33) (CD) J Berry 8 9 10 P Roberts (3) 6
4 0600 THAAYER (16) K Bell 3 9 8 R Havlin (3) 2
5 340806 YOUNG IBNR (83) (D) P Evans 3 9 6 G Duffield 8 V
6 100000 MISS BANANAS (24) (D) C Kellett 3 9 6 N Carlisle 6
7 000030 HANNAH'S USHER (24) (CD) B Baugh 5 9 4 J Fanning 11
8 105000 PRIDE OF BRIXTON (23) (CD) P Evans 6 0 4 Dane O'Neill 4
9 080323 RITA'S ROCK APE (40) R Brotherton 3 8 4 F Norton 10
10 110000 LA DOYENNE (24) (D) C Booth 4 8 2 M Fenton 9
11 304000 HIL RHAPSODY (8) (D) S Palling 4 9 0 G Faulkner (3) 1 B
12 0-0300 SWEET MAGIC (155) (D) L Lloyd-James 7 9 0 Kimberley Hart (5) 13
13 001401 SUPERFRILLS (24) (D) Miss L Siddall 5 9 0 L Charnock 12
– 13 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Superfrills, 4-1 Hannah's Usher, 6-1 Rita's Rock Ape, 8-1 Soaked, 10-1 Young Ibnr, Pride Of Brixton, La Doyenne, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Superfrills is in good heart and should run another sound race, but preference is for RITA'S ROCK APE, who has been knocking on the door in recent turf runs and looks worth an interest on her AW debut.

9.00 MARTHA & THE VANDELLAS SELLING STAKES (G) £2,500 added 2YO 5f

1 334520 LEGAL VENTURE (17) (D) N Littmoden 9 2 7 G McLaughlin 4
2 423014 DISPOL CLAN (88) (CD) O Murray Smith 8 11 R Winston (3) 1
3 422403 LADY CARBRON (10) (CD) J Berry 8 11 P Fessey 2
4 FOR SWAN R Fahey 8 6 J Quinn 6
5 206452 NICHOLAS MISTRESS (10) P Evans 0 6 C Cogan (7) 6
6 U40504 SUPER STRIDES (10) C Fairhurst 8 6 A Culhane 5
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Nicholas Mistress, 11-4 Lady Carbron, 3-1 Dispol Clan, 9-2 Legal Venture, 10-1 Super Strides, 14-1 For Swan

FORM VERDICT

DISPOL CLAN was a moderate fourth when stepped up to 6f last time and will appreciate this return to her ideal trip. She edged out Legal Venture here in early October, and is taken to do so again.

9.30 TAMLA MOTOWN HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,000 added 1m 4f

1 65-202 NOUKARI (14) P Evans 5 9 13 Dane O'Neill 3
2 00-503 SIOUX (26) C Thornton 4 9 12 Dean McKeown 11
3 503400 OUR PEOPLE (10) M Johnston 4 0 12 J Fanning 10
4 054002 KINGS ASSEMBLY (25) J Smyth-Osbourne 9 0 12 M Fenton 1
5 0000-3 RISCATTO (23) W Muir 4 0 10 T Sprake 2
6 600010 DESERT SPA (25) (CD) P Harris 3 9 0 A Culhane 8
7 206561 CRY FOR FREEDOM (22) J Pearce 3 9 7 R Price 4
8 221350 MISS VITA (28) (CD) (BF) R Williams 4 9 6 G Duffield 12
9 050000 ROLLING PATCH (12) E Alston 4 0 6 Melanie Worden (7) 5
10 406405 SAKHAROV (23) (C) J Neville 6 9 5 G Faulkner (3) 6
11 000085 LAA JADEED (23) J Glover 3 9 3 S D Williams 9
12 045202 OXBANE (12) Mrs S Lamyman 4 9 2 J Quinn 7
– 12 declared –

BETTING: 9-2 Oxbane, 13-2 Desert Spa, Noukari, 7-1 Cry For Freedom, Our People, Cry For Freedom, 8-1 Sioux, 10-1 Kings Assembly, Miss Vita, Riscatto, 12-1 others

FORM VERDICT

An open contest and MISS VITA can only be a tentative selection. She has disappointed on her last two starts but scored very easily over course and distance in August and is still relatively unexposed. Cry For Freedom, Desert Spa and Noukari are others to consider.

PUNTERS' GUIDE

Indicators point in direction of Malta

The former top jump jockey Steve Smith Eccles analyses today's Murphy's Gold Cup

Senor El Betrutti: The flying grey was well beaten on his reappearance at Wincanton but will come on for that. Must have a sound surface.

Simply Dashing: Ran a good third to the evergreen Strath Royal in the Charlie Hall Chase and sure to come on for the run. The drop in trip should also be an advantage.

Bertone: Would have an each-way chance if the ground came up fast but looks another also-ran.

Cyfor Malta: Winner of last season's Cathcart Chase at the Festival, the Martin Pipe-trained ante-post favourite will take all the beating – if he's fit enough to do himself justice.

Papillon: Irish raider whose trainer, Ted Walsh, will be praying for rain.

Mandys Mantino: Third in last season's Arkle Chase, so no mug. He will strip fitter for his seasonal bow at Ascot but steps up in trip here.

Potter's Bay: Faces a formidable task for his first outing of the campaign.

Hoh Warrior: Totally outclassed, he would do well to finish in the first six.

Pimberley Place: Refused to race on his seasonal debut and would not win this if he set off now.

Danger Baby: Has won a couple of chases already this season but this step up in class looks beyond him.

Dr Leunt: A live outsider who chased home Cyfor Malta in the Cathcart Chase. The ground was too fast for him at Stratford last time but the outing will have put him straight.

Philip's Woody: Good on his day but this old-timer is getting a bit long in the tooth.

Queen Of Spades: Well fancied but I don't give her a prayer. Her jumping is suspect and being a few pounds out of the handicap won't help.

Conclusion: **CYFOR MALTA** is a worthy favourite and should be fit enough despite rumours that Martin Pipe's training routine has been hindered by the laying of a new gallop. Martin is a past master at getting his horses spot on first time. I expect Mandys Mantino to run a big race if he gets the trip. Simply Dashing and Dr Leunt could fight it out for the minor places.

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

AYR

1.45: SPARKY GAYLE reportedly suffered from a lung infection last season, but was previously a brilliant novice and is worth anther chance to realise his potential. Last year's Midland National winner Seven Towers has had the benefit of a run and looks the danger.

* * *

3.45: Jonjo O'Neill has made a flying start to the new season and he should keep up the good work with SLEEPY RIVER, who looks destined to improve on his surprise Kelso comeback win. He looks nicely weighted on his old Irish form.

CHELTENHAM

2.20: DANCE SO SUITE has not put a foot wrong since moving to Ireland for a hurdling campaign and can make it five wins on the trot. Bluedonix has looked impressive and looks the best of the home team.

* * *

2.55: Cheltenham specialists are a rare breed, but DR LEUNT ran his best race over hurdles here and again showed a liking for the Prestbury Park undulations when second to Cyfor Malta in the Cathcart Chase at the Festival last March. With a massive pull in the weights over the ante-post favourite, Philip Hobbs' mudlark could pull off a surprise.

* * *

3.30: The form of Strong Chairman took a dive at the end of last season but he is to be feared on the strength of his first two runs, particularly as his stable and jockey can do no wrong at present. BANJO took this race last season without the benefit of a previous outing and is just taken to follow up.

* * *

4.05: Last year's juvenile hurdlers are not yet proving a very inspired bunch, and even though Borazon was one of the better ones he could find it difficult to concede 16lb to the Irish raider AMBLE SPEEDY. He was a decent performer three seasons ago and his low-key comeback effort looked the perfect warm-up for this task.

FIRST SHOW

ANYONE WANTING to back Cyfor Malta for today's Murphy's Gold Cup should take the 3-1 with Ladbrokes. The Magic Sign are clearly taking a stand against the Martin-Pipe trained favourite, who looks sure to start at slightly shorter odds than that. Papillon – available at 10-1 on Tuesday but only 15-2 now – and Mandys Mantino – 8-1 on Tuesday, but only 13-2 now – have been the best backed ante-post, along with Dr Leunt, available at 16-1 on Tuesday but no better than 12-1 this morning.

IAN DAVIES

CHELTENHAM 2.55

Horse	C	H	L	S	T
Cyfor Malta	2-1	9-4	3-1	9-4	5-2
Mandys Mantino	13-2	6-1	6-1	6-1	13-2
Queen Of Spades	6-1	6-1	11-2	6-1	7-1
Papillon	15-2	7-1	6-1	7-1	13-2
Simply Dashing	8-1	8-1	9-1	8-1	9-1
Senor El Betrutti	11-1	10-1	12-1	10-1	11-1
Challenger Du Luc	12-1	12-1	12-1	12-1	12-1
Dr Leunt	12-1	11-1	9-1	12-1	11-1
Bertone	18-1	20-1	20-1	20-1	20-1
Potter's Bay	20-1	20-1	18-1	16-1	16-1
Danger Baby	25-1	33-1	33-1	33-1	25-1
Philip's Woody	33-1	33-1	25-1	25-1	25-1
Pimberley Place	40-1	33-1	33-1	33-1	28-1
Hoh Warrior	50-1	50-1	50-1	50-1	33-1

Each-way a quarter the odds places 1, 2, 3
C Coral H William Hill L Ladbrokes S Stanley T Tote

10-YEAR TALE ON MURPHY'S GOLD CUP

	1988	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97
Fate of the favourites:	4	7	5	10	1	3	7	1/7	6	4
Winner's place in betting:	3	0	0	3	1	3	2	1J	0	0
Starting-prices:	6-1	10-1	12-1	15-2	11-2	13-2	5-1	4-1	7-1	33-1
Winners' weights:	11 2	10 4	10 2	10 1	10 10	11 8	11 11	11 9	10 2	10 0
Winners' ages:	7	9	7	8	7	8	9	9	6	8

Profit or loss to £1 stake: Favourites -£1.00 Second Favourites -£4.00

Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last race: 70%

Shortest-priced winner: Dublin Flyer (1995) 4-1

Longest-priced winner: Senor El Betrutti (1997) 33-1

Top trainers: T Forster - Pegwell Bay (1988), Dublin Flyer (1995)
J Gifford - Bradbury Star (1993 & 1994)

Top jockey: R Dunwoody - Another Coral (1991), Challenger Du Luc (1996)

CHELTENHAM

HYPERION

1.15 Dangerus Precedent
1.45 Skycab
2.20 Dance So Suite
2.55 DR LEUNT (nap)
3.30 Banjo
4.05 Amble Speedy (nb)

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places).
■ Left-hand, galloping course with stiff fences. Uphill run-in of 240yd.
■ Course is 1m N of town off A435. Bus link from Cheltenham station (served by Bristol, Birmingham and London, Paddington) 2m. ADMISSION: Club £20 (juniors, 16-24 years, £12); Tattersalls £15; Courage Enclosure £7. CAR PARK: Free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

■ LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 38 winners from 254 runners (success rate 15%), O Nicholson 27-186 (14.5%), N Twiston-Davies 20-189 (10.6%), K Bailey 14-74 (18.9%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A P McCoy 37 wins from 139 rides (success rate 26.6%), N Williamson 31-143 (21.7%), R Dunwoody 30-191 (15.6%), J Osborne 24-118 (20.3%).
■ FAVOURITES: 191 wins in 483 races (39.5%).
LONG DISTANCE RUNNER (within Britain): Fairy Ridge (1.10) sent 235 miles.
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.

1.10 MURPHY'S HURDLE (CLASS B) £10,000 added 3YO 2m 110yds

1	1251	CHARLIE'S GOLD (9) (D) (Classic Gold) A Bailey 11 6	O Gallagher
2	21	DANGERUS PRECEDENT (14) (D) (Chris Brasher) C Egerton 11 2	N Williamson
3	133	FAIRY RIDGE (14) (D) (J P McManus) J J O'Neill 11 2	G Bradley
4	04P-31	KATARINO (FR) (4) (D) (Robert Waley-Cohen) N Henderson 11 2	M A Fitzgerald
5	1F	SIMPLY GIFTED (14) (D) (BF) (Steve Hammond) T Easterby 11 2	L Wyer
6		BORDER TRADER (F24) (J Mulholland and D Hughes) J S Moore 10 12	B Clifford
7		FIELDS OF OMAGH (USA) (F59) (Paul Mellon) I Balding 10 12	R Dunwoody
8		LASTMAN (USA) (F18) (Darren C Mercer) D Nicholson 10 12	A Maguire
9	31	EDWARDA (11) (D) (R Stanley) M Pipe 10 11	A P McCoy
10		HARE PARK POLLY (F15) (Peter Charter) A Carroll 10 7	T J Murphy

– 10 declared –

BETTING: 13-8 Simply Gifted, 7-2 Dangerus Precedent, 6-1 Edwarda, 7-1 Charlie's Gold, 8-1 Fairy Ridge, 16-1 Katarino, 12-1 Fields Of Omagh, Lastman, 16-1 others

1997: The French Furzes 3 11 6 A P McCoy 7-2 (M Pipe) 10 ran

FORM VERDICT

A competitive opener featuring half a dozen winners and a couple of interesting hurdling newcomers, although preference is usually for experience in this type of event. KATARINO, who made a big impression when scoring an easy success at Newbury on Tuesday, is preferred to Dangerus Precedent and Simply Gifted.

1.45 WADWORTH 6X NOVICE CHASE (CLASS B) £14,000 added 2m 4f 110yds

1	4S1-F0	BLOWING ROCK (15) (C) (Mrs P Andrews) Miss H Knight 6 11 6	J Culloty
2	414-2	SKYCAB (22) (P H Betts Ltd) J Gifford 6 11 0	P Hide
3	061-F2	STORM FORECAST (7) (Lord Vestey) Miss H Knight 6 11 0	A Maguire
4	/10P2-	STORMYFAIRWEATHER (189) (C D BF) (Mrs C Harbury) N Henderson 6 11 0	M A Fitzgerald
5	5F422-	ZAGGY LANE (199) (E T Way) P Rodford 6 11 0	S Burrough

– 5 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Skycab, 5-2 Storm Forecast, 11-4 Stormyfairweather, 6-1 Blowing Rock, 33-1 Zaggy Lane.

1997: Tullymurry Toff 6 11 5 E Callaghan evens fav (J M Jefferson) 4 ran

FORM VERDICT

Both Skycab and Storm Forecast will win chases in due course, but STORMYFAIRWEATHER has the potential to do really well now he is switched to fencing and can make a winning debut over the bigger obstacles.

2.20 MACKESON NOVICE HURDLE (GRADE 2) (CLASS A) £14,000 added 2m 110yds C4

1	420-11	BLUEDONIX (FR) (14) (D) (Mrs David Thompson) D Nicholson 5 11 5 *Pink, purple cross belts, hooped sleeves, purple cap*	A Maguire
2	1-111	DANCE SO SUITE (F42) (D) (J S Gutkin) E O'Grady (Ir) 6 11 5 *Yellow, Royal Blue stripe, striped sleeves, Yellow cap, Royal Blue spots*	N Williamson
3	1F	GRECIAN DART (14) (D) (Lord Wanstock) N Henderson 6 11 2 *Pale Blue, White and Yellow check cap*	M A Fitzgerald
4	100-13	RATHBAWN PRINCE (23) (D) (BF) (T J Culhane) D Hughes (Ir) 6 11 2 *Red, Black stars, Black sleeves, Green cap*	R Hughes
5	53-2F1	ASHLEY MUCK (11)(D) (M Archer & J Broadhurst) N Twiston-Davies 5 10 12 *Light Blue, Maroon chevron, halved sleeves, Light Blue and Maroon quartered cap*	C Llewellyn
6	220-45	DAVENPORT BANQUET (80) (D) (Mrs J Ryan) R O'Leary (Ir) 7 10 12 *Black, Yellow chevrons, Yellow sleeves, Black armlets, quartered cap*	G Bradley
7	011-12	HOH INVADER (17) (D) (BF) (D F Allport) C Mann 6 10 12 *Red, Black chevrons, White sleeves, Black armlets, White cap*	R Dunwoody
8	P/325-	PROSPERO (294) (Mrs Gaynor Scruton) Mrs A Perrett 5 10 12 *Royal Blue and White diabolo, chevrons on sleeves, White cap, Royal Blue star*	C Maude
9	4	ROCKFORCE (14) (G Z Mizel) P Nicholls 6 10 12 *Pink and Purple (quartered), Pink sleeves*	J Tizzard
10	1	SWIFT (20) (D) (General Sir Geoffrey Howlett) M Polglase 4 10 12 *Maroon and Light Blue stripes, Maroon sleeves, Light Blue armlets, Maroon cap*	A P McCoy
11	2¹F-15	AFON ALWEN (42) (D) (BF) (Triple Two) P Hobbs 5 10 7 *Yellow, Dark Green spots, Dark Green and Yellow halved sleeves, Yellow cap*	T J Murphy
12	1012-2	BORA BORA (21) (D) (BF) (Mme J Baldanza) N Twiston-Davies 5 10 7 *Purple, Emerald Green triple diamond, sleeves and cap*	T Jenks

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Bluedonix, Dance So Suite, 6-1 Grecian Dart, 7-1 Ashley Muck, 8-1 Hoh Invader, Rockforce, 9-1 Bora Bora, 10-1 Rathbawn Prince, 14-1 Davenport Banquet, 16-1 others

1997: Circus Star 4 10 12 A Maguire 11-8 fav (D Nicholson) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE

Bluedonix: Useful winner on the flat and over hurdles in France. Has made promising start for new connections, winning at Stratford and following up by 13 lengths in a hot novice hurdle at Ascot (2m, soft) last month

Dance So Suite: Former useful handicapper trained by Paul Cole now a four-time winner over hurdles in Ireland. Most recent was 9 length novice hurdle victory at Tralee (2m good) back in August. Ran creditable sixth in Irish Cesarewitch six weeks ago

Grecian Dart: Opened hurdling account with comfortable win in a Uttoxeter (2m good) maiden. Was in second place when fell at the last behind Bluedonix at Ascot. Looked beaten and should not reverse placings despite 3lb pull

Rathbawn Prince: Looked a useful prospect when comfortable winner of a 21-runner maiden at Fairyhouse (2m, good to soft) on hurdling debut but could only finish second when favourite to follow up at Punchestown (2m 2f, heavy) two weeks later

Ashley Muck: Half-brother to smart Mrs Muck showed he has inherited some of her talent when comfortable 1½ winner of a novice event at Exeter (2m 1f, soft) two weeks ago, after showing only modest form in bumpers. Has looked a difficult ride

Davenport Banquet: Last outing was when well-beaten fifth behind Moscow Express in a useful novice chase at Listowel (2m, good to soft) in September. Appears well held by Dance So Suite on previous hurdling form

Hoh Invader: Dual bumper winner last season scored easily at Worcester on his hurdling bow but looked as if he needed a further test when disappointing second, 3 lengths behind Santabless over track and trip (good) last month

Prospero: Best effort from 3 runs last season was when 5 length second in a Grade 2 event over 2m 6f at Sandown a year ago. Likely to need the race

Rockforce: Useful 1m 2f handicapper on the flat for Mick Channon, made an encouraging debut over hurdles when 21 lengths 4th to Bluedonix at Ascot last month, after jumping sketchily early on. Now has 3lb pull and should finish much closer today

Swift: Light-framed gelding, inconsistent on the flat, driven out to win a weakish novice hurdle at Wincanton (2m good) by 3½ lengths from Baranov last month

Afon Alwen: Looked useful when easy winner of novice at Newton Abbot in June and was odds-on to follow-up at Chepstow (2m, good) last month, but ran inexplicably poorly to be 12 lengths fifth to stablemate Beacon Silver. Worth another chance

Bora Bora: Useful bumper performer, looked in need of further when a disappointing favourite, beaten 19 lengths by Raleagh Native at Worcester (2m 2f, good) last month

VERDICT: Bluedonix was an easy winner of one of the best novice races of the season to date and will be fancied to follow up, although Rockforce, from the in-form Paul Nicholls stable, looks set to get much closer than at Ascot. Afon Alwen, also from a stable which is firing, can pose a threat if back to her early-season best. However, Irish raider DANCE SO SUITE has the class and the experience to take his winning sequence to five for Eddie O'Grady.

2.55 MURPHY'S GOLD CUP HANDICAP CHASE (Grade 3) (A) £75,000 added 2m 4f 110yds C4

1	334P-4	SENOR EL BETRUTTI (20) (CD) (G Nock) Mrs S Nock 9 12 0 *Purple, Emerald Green Cross of Lorraine, Emerald Green cap*	G Bradley
2	2F40F-	CHALLENGER DU LUC (224) (CD) (D A Johnson) M Pipe 8 11 13 *Royal Blue, Emerald Green sleeves, White cap, Emerald Green and white striped cap*	R Dunwoody B
3	6462-3	SIMPLY DASHING (14) (D) (Steve Hammond) T Easterby 7 11 12 *Red, White sash, Emerald Green sleeves, White armlets, Emerald Green cap*	L Wyer
4	314-02	BERTONE (20) (CD) (Mrs H J Duffey) K Bailey 9 11 10 *Green and Red (quartered), Yellow sleeves, Red cap*	N Williamson
5	11211-	CYFOR MALTA (FR) (226) (CD) (D A Johnson) M Pipe 5 11 3 *Royal Blue, Emerald Green sleeves, White cap, Emerald Green spots*	A P McCoy
6	0102-2	PAPILLON (14) (CD) (Mrs J Maxwell Moran) T Walsh (Ir) 7 10 13 *Emerald Green, Light Blue seams, Emerald Green sleeves, Emerald Green cap, Light Blue star*	R Walsh
7	1P32-3	MANDYS MANTINO (14) (C) (D) (J Plackett) J Gifford 8 10 8 *Light Blue, White striped sleeves*	P Hide
8	51P20-	POTTER'S BAY (241) (CD) (Mrs J E Potter) D Nicholson 8 10 8 *White, Red braces, Emerald Green and White check sleeves, White cap, Red star*	A Maguire
9	5112-R	PIMBERLEY PLACE (28) (D) (A J Cresser) N Twiston-Davies 10 10 3 *Royal Blue, White hoop, diabolo on sleeves*	T Jenks B
10	1RP-P6	HOH WARRIOR (11) (D Allport & R B Michaelson) C Mann 7 10 3 *Red, Black chevrons, White sleeves, Black armlets, White cap*	D Gallagher
11	2-1103	DANGER BABY (14) (D) (Shark Racing) P Bowen 6 10 1 *Dark Green, Red seams and sleeves, Black cap*	T J Murphy B
12	325F-6	DR LEUNT (28) (P Emery) P Hobbs 7 10 0 *Yellow, Dark Blue stripe, Dark Blue sleeves, Yellow armlets, White cap*	R Farrant
13	6112-0	PHILIP'S WOODY (108) (D) (B R Wisdon) N Henderson 10 10 0 *Red, Brown hoop, striped sleeves*	M A Fitzgerald
14	33263-	QUEEN OF SPADES (225) (C) (Mrs R Vaughan) N Twiston-Davies 8 10 0 *Red, Emerald Green star, hooped sleeves, Red cap, Emerald Green star*	C Llewellyn

– 14 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Queen Of Spades 9st 12lb.

BETTING: 5-2 Cyfor Malta, 6-1 Mandys Mantino, Papillon, Queen Of Spades, 8-1 Simply Dashing, 10-1 Senor El Betrutti, 11-1 Dr Leunt, 12-1 Challenger Du Luc, 16-1 Potter's Bay, 20-1 Bertone, 25-1 Philip's Woody, 33-1 Danger Baby, Hoh Warrior, Pimberley Place

1997: Senor El Betrutti 8 10 0 J Osborne 33-1 (Mrs S Nock) 9 ran

FORM GUIDE

Senor El Betrutti: Last year's winner from 10lb lower. Proved course specialist with later win in Tripleprint Gold Cup (from 3lb higher) and 16 lengths fourth in Gold Cup. Needed run on Wincanton reappearance. Would not want going too soft

Challenger Du Luc: 3 lengths runner-up last year (off same mark) and subsequent Tripleprint Gold Cup and King George second. Goes well fresh, but no battler and very difficult to win with. Acts on any going

Simply Dashing: Disappointing last term after early Ascot win, though good 9 lengths second to Escartefigue at Aintree (3m 1f). Below best when 6 lengths third to Strath Royal on Wetherby (3m 1f) reappearance. Would not want much rain.

Bertone: Slightly unlucky 6 lengths third to Senor El Betrutti from 5lb lower last year. Ascot winner off 6lb lower in the Spring and encouraging 12 lengths second to Super Tactics at Wincanton last time. Best on sound surface and possibly exposed now

Cyfor Malta: Cathcart Chase (2m 5f) winner here last March and easy 13 lengths winner of John Hughes Trophy at Aintree. 10lb higher here but open to improvement. Acts on any going

Papillon: Irish National (3m 5f) runner-up after head win over Pete The Parson over 2m 5f here from 5lb lower. Encouraging second to Delphi Lodge at Navan (2m 1f) on reappearance and looks each-way value from useful mark. Acts on any going

Mandys Mantino: Close third in Arkle Trophy (2m) here in March and promising 7 lengths third to Dontleavethenest off the mark on Ascot (2m) reappearance. Weighted to take a hand but best on sound surface and slight stamina doubt

Potter's Bay: 24 lengths fifth to Senor El Betrutti last year from 10lb higher. Did not progress a great deal afterwards, despite Doncaster win and narrow Warwick second to Dublin Flyer. Prone to the odd bad mistake

Pimberley Place: Smart performer on his day but occasionally reluctant starter. Double Ludlow scorer before creditable 10 lengths second to The Grey Monk here (2m 5f) in April. Refused to race on reappearance but back in blinkers now

Hoh Warrior: Failed to live up to promise of Market Rasen debut win last term, despite 10 lengths Ascot (2m 3f) win from Strong Paladin. Held by Mandys Mantino on Arkle running and soon in trouble behind Lake Kariba on Exeter reappearance

Danger Baby: Career-best effort when beating Glamanglitz at Uttoxeter (2m 5f) in January but struggles in this grade and faded 2 out when 24 lengths third to Coome Hill at Ascot (3m) last month. Best on a fast surface

Dr Leunt: Likely outsider on 3½ length second to Cyfor Malta in Cathcart (2m 5f) here in March. 26lb better with Cyfor Malta now. Disappointing reappearance behind Royal Event at Stratford but easier going should suit

Philip's Woody: Prolific winner in lower grades (placed 38 times in 49 races). Weighted up to best on 14 length Stratford 2nd to Stanmore in May and best on fast going

Queen Of Spades: Chance on staying-on neck win over Direct Route at this fixture last year and 11 lengths sixth to Champleve in Arkle Trophy (2m) here. First-time but winner last three seasons, but would not want soft ground

VERDICT: With a 10lb rise rise for his Aintree win, Cyfor Malta, is no bet at ante-post odds. He has scope for improvement, but as a precocious French-bred may not be progressing as fast as his contemporaries now. Dr Leunt, Queen Of Spades and Papillon take the eye as possible challengers, but the value wager may be SIMPLY DASHING, who appeared to be finding his feet again last Spring. He looked a possible winner for a long way on his Wetherby reappearance and will strip fitter here.

3.30 FLOWERS ORIGINAL HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS B) £15,000 added 3m 3f 110yds C4

1	40B-5	GO BALLISTIC (17) (Mrs B J Lockhart) J O'Shea 9 12 0 *Turquoise and Silver diamonds*	M A Fitzgerald
2	1360F-	BANJO (FR) (224) (CD) (Darren C Mercer) D Nicholson 8 11 11 *Black, White hoops, Black sleeves, White spots*	A Maguire
3	/214P-	STRONG CHAIRMAN (288) (Hunt & Co) P Nicholls 7 10 1 *Black, yellow stars, black sleeves, yellow cap*	J Tizzard (3)
4	311P1-	KENDAL CAVALIER (213) (C) (D) (M Wingfield Digby) B R Millman 8 10 0 *Pink, Black chevron and armlets, quartered cap*	O Salter (3)
5	1/FP-3	TENNESSEE TWIST (11) (Halewood International) Mrs J Pitman 6 10 0 *Black, Red and White striped sleeves, hooped cap*	N Williamson
6	2/122-	YAHMI (337) (C) (BF) (W E Sturt) J Old 8 10 0 *Dark Blue and White check, Dark Blue sleeves, White cap, Dark Blue star*	T J Murphy
7	111-22	CAVALERO (1) (C) (BF) (H J Manners) H Manners 8 10 0 *Dark Blue, Red cap, Green spots*	Mr A Charles-Jones

– 7 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Tennessee Twist 9st 13lb, Yahmi 9st 12lb, Cavalero 9st 10lb

BETTING: 5-2 Kendal Cavalier, 11-4 Strong Chairman, 7-2 Yahmi, 4-1 Banjo, 7-1 Cavalero, 16-1 Tennessee Twist, 20-1 Go Ballistic

1997: Banjo 7 11 2 A Maguire 7-1 (D Nicholson) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

Go Ballistic: Smart chaser, winner of last season's valuable Jim Ford chase at Wincanton. Warmed up for fences with an outing over hurdles, finishing 21 lengths behind The Proms here (2m 4f, good) last month

Banjo: Came back from illness and change of stable to win this race first time out last season, and subsequently ran 3rd to See More Business in Rehearsal Chase at Chepstow. Form tailed-off towards end of season, fell 1st in National. Will stay

Strong Chairman: Former point-to-pointer who looked a useful prospect at the start of last season, finishing second on his debut and then winning at Newbury over 3m. Disappointed in two runs after long lay-off at end of season

Kendall Cavalier: Progressive handicap chaser who finished last season on winning note, beating Torduff Express by 12 lengths here (3m 2f, heavy) last April

Tennessee Twist: Very promising novice chase of two seasons ago, failed to impress in comeback races last term, but should improve on distant third to Allow at Exeter (2m 6f, soft) last time

Yahmi: Former useful staying hurdler, well-beaten by Strong Chairman at Newbury a year ago, having previously beaten that rival here on his chasing bow (Kendall Cavalier third). Only run since was second to Edgemoor Prince here (3m 1f, good) last December

Cavalero: Unbeaten hunter-chaser last term, including the Fox Hunters at Aintree, makes quick reappearance after finishing 9 lengths second to Tamarindo in an amateurs' handicap chase here (3m 1f, good to soft) yesterday

VERDICT: In a race featuring a number of promising young staying chasers from just out of the handicap there should be little between Yahmi and Strong Chairman, with the latter, whose stable and jockey are in such fine form, just favoured. At the top of the handicap Go Ballistic looks vulnerable with his big weight. BANJO also shoulders 9lb more than when victorious in the race last year. However he runs well fresh and may have the class to make a winning return.

4.05 BODDINGTONS HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS B) £12,000 added 3m 2f C4

1	00-11P	DARAYDAN (112) (C) (D A Johnson) M Pipe 6 12 0 *Royal Blue, Emerald Green sleeves, White cap, Emerald Green spots*	G Supple (3)
2	00026-	ALLEGATION (200) (C) (Martin Pipe Racing) M Pipe 8 11 11 *Black, White triple diamond, diabolo on sleeves, White cap*	C Maude V
3	130-41	BORAZON (21) (M Archer & Miss J Broadhurst) N Twiston-Davies 4 11 3 *Light Blue, Maroon chevron, halved sleeves, Light Blue and Maroon quartered cap*	C Llewellyn
4	22156	RUNAWAY PETE (USA) (24) (J D Smeeden) M Pipe 8 10 9 *RYellow, Light Green sash, striped cap*	A P McCoy
5	4211-	JET TABS (297) (Jet Stationery Co) Mrs J Pitman 6 10 2 *JGold, Black hoop, hooped cap*	R Dunwoody
6	2520/6	AMBLE SPEEDY (34) (R Minnis) A L Moore (Ir) 6 10 1 *Yellow, Brown sleeves and cap*	B J Geraghty (3)
7	411-P	LATCHFORD (24) (Ten Strong Racing) I Williams 6 10 0 *Royal Blue, White stripe, hooped sleeves*	Mr R Forristal (7)
8	3/20-2	SAN GIORGIO (36) (CD) (Peter Kelsall) C A Smith 8 10 0 *Royal Blue, Pink Cross of Lorraine, quartered cap*	A Maguire
9	4-P11P	SNOW BOARD (21) (D) (F J Sainsbury) Mrs M Jones 9 10 0 *Yellow, Emerald Green diamond, Emerald Green diamonds on Yellow sleeves and cap*	T J Murphy B

– 9 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Latchford 9st 8lb, San Giorgio 9st 11lb, Snow Board 8st 11lb.

BETTING: 5-2 Jet Tabs, 7-2 Borazon, 9-2 Amble Speedy, 13-2 Runaway Pete, 7-1 Daraydan, 8-1 Latchford, 9-1 Allegation, 14-1 others

1997: Gysart 8 11 3 A P McCoy 9-2 (M Pipe) 12 ran

FORM GUIDE

Daraydan: Third to Istabraq in 1997 Sun Alliance. Easy winner from 1lb lower over 2m 5f here last term and capable of going close at his best but unsuited by soft

Allegation: In handicapper's grip last term, but 10lb lower now. Showed he was still a force when second to The Proms here in April (2m 5f). Market the best guide

Borazon: Smart juvenile last term but career-best effort when beating Aquavita 10 lengths at Worcester (2m 4f) last time. Likely to progress again over this longer trip

Runaway Pete: Useful front-runner, though yet to win beyond 2m 6f. Winner off this mark but has to improve on latest distant 6th to Welsh Silk at Chepstow (2m 4f)

Jet Tabs: Highly-regarded progressive sort, but unraced since 5 lengths Windsor maiden win in January. Plenty to do at weights but open to improvement at new trip

Amble Speedy: Once-smart staying hurdler and chaser. First outing for two seasons when staying on 13 lengths sixth to Mister Chippy at Naas (2m 4f). Difficult to assess but from shrewd Irish yard and could be on handy mark

Latchford: Hat-trick scorer in minor company last backend. Disappointing comeback at Chepstow and stiff task from 14lb higher than latest win

San Giorgio: Seeking first win in more than three years. Creditable 16 lengths 2nd to Jet Boys on Huntingdon (3m 2f) reappearance but major task at the weights

Snow Board: Prolific winner in lower grades over last three seasons. Disappointing at Market Rasen since easy Ludlow win from 16lb lower. Hefty task at the weights

VERDICT: Martin Pipe's trio of runners present a problem, but all appear to have seen better days and it should pay to go with the progressive BORAZON, whose yard has good lines to the staying hurdle form. He appears sure to appreciate this new trip and could be the one to deny the Irish raider Amble Speedy, who had some useful form three seasons ago and appeared to be on the comeback trail at Naas.

AYR

HYPERION

1.15 Course Doctor
1.45 Sparky Gayle
2.15 Saintes
2.45 To-Day To-Day
3.15 Burnt Imp
3.45 Sleepy River

GOING: Good to Soft (Soft in places in back straight of hurdles course).
■ Left-hand galloping course; run-in 210yds.
■ Course is E of town on A758. Ayr station (service from Glasgow) 1m. ADMISSION: Club £14; Grandstand £7 (OAPs half-price). CAR PARK: Free

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

■ LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley — 22 winners from 126 runners gives a success ratio of 17.5%; P Monteith 17 from 117 (14.5%); J J O'Neill 16 from 99 (16.2%); L Lungo 16 from 131 (12.2%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 35 wins from 154 rides gives a success ratio of 22.7%; B Storey 24 from 143 (16.8%); P Niven 17 from 109 (15.6%); R Supple 11 from 56 (19.6%).
■ FAVOURITES: 144 wins in 360 races (40%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Lambrini Lad (2.15), Thorntoun House (visored) (2.45).

1.15 GLENGOYNE WHISKY NOVICE CHASE (QUALIFIER) (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £3,600

1	21030	VINTAGE TAITTINGER (35) (De-Haan Racing) J Goldie 6 11 10	A Dobbin
2	B612-F	COURSE DOCTOR (21) (D) (BF) (R Johnson) G M Moore 6 11 0	J Callaghan
3	3F255-	JUDICIOUS NORMAN (175) (J Adam) J Adam 7 11 0	B Powell
4	1U12/P	LAGEN BRIDGE (21) (CD) (Mr & Mrs A C Milligan) D Moffatt 9 11 0	D J Moffatt
5	005-32	PIN MONY (15) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 6 11 0	S Durack
6	1101-4	LEGAL RIGHT (USA) (21) (Pallet Recycling) J J O'Neill 5 10 13	Doubtful

– 6 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Course Doctor, 5-2 Vintage Taittinger, 9-2 Pin Mony, 7-1 Lagen Bridge, 14-1 Judicious Norman

1997: Edelweis Du Moulin 5 11 0 R Dunwoody 2-9 fav (G Richards) 5 ran

FORM VERDICT

COURSE DOCTOR, who has always looked a chasing type, showed enough promise before falling at Carlisle to earn the vote.

1.45 SEAN GRAHAM LIMITED HANDICAP CHASE (B) £16,000 3m 1f Penalty Value £10,783 C4

1	2F41P-	UNGUIDED MISSILE (226) (CD) (D E Harrison) N Richards 10 11 12 *Light Blue, Royal Blue triple diamond, diamonds on sleeves and cap*	A Dobbin
2	/4342-	SPARKY GAYLE (241) (C) (BF) (Mr & Mrs R A Green) C Parker 8 11 1 *Emerald Green, Yellow sash and star on cap*	B Storey
3	1111-5	SEVEN TOWERS (14) (CD) (Mrs E A Murray) Mrs M Reveley 9 11 0 *Yellow, Black epaulets, White sleeves, Yellow cap, Black star*	P Niven
4	131-C2	DAVY BLAKE (3) (D) (T Dalgetty) T Dalgetty 11 10 5 *Chocolate, Green cap, White spots*	C McCormack (5)
5	11F1-5	EIRESPRAY (14) (C) (BF) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 7 10 5 *Emerald Green and Yellow (quartered), White sleeves and cap*	S Durack

– 5 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st 5lb. True handicap weights: Davy Blake 9st 13lb, Eirespray 9st 13lb.

BETTING: 11-8 Sparky Gayle, 11-4 Seven Towers, 3-1 Eirespray, 4-1 Unguided Missile, 14-1 Davy Blake

1997: Mr Mulligan 9 11 12 R Dunwoody 1-6 fav (N Chance) 5 ran

FORM GUIDE

Unguided Missile: Top class chaser who took a 3m 1f handicap chase at the Cheltenham Festival before jumping poorly behind Escartefigue in the Martell Cup at Aintree. Usually runs well fresh

Sparky Gayle: Unbeaten novice two seasons ago, seemed out of sorts for much of last term but looked on the way back when second to Super Coin in Mildmay Of Fleet at Cheltenham (2m 4f, good). Should appreciate step up in trip

Seven Towers: Former Midland National winner sure to come on for reappearance last of five, 19 lengths behind Strath Royal at Wetherby (3m 1f, good) last month

Davy Blake: Front-running former hunter chaser improved greatly to take three handicap chases over 3m 1f at the end of last season. Makes quick reappearance after finishing 12 lengths 2nd to Naughty Future over much shorter at Kelso (2m 6f, soft)

Eirespray: Progressive chaser who won a Grade 2 Chase here over 2m 4f last season. Disappointing favourite when 5th, 9 lengths behind Profluent at Wetherby last month on reappearance after muddling pace. Has never tried further than 2m 5f

VERDICT: A small but classy field. Unguided Missile is from a stable with a great record at the track but can be a dodgy jumper and has to concede alot of weight to some progressive rivals. SPARKY GALE 's novice form from two seasons ago was good enough to make him favourite for the Murphy's Gold Cup first time out on this day last season. He has since left the impression that today's test of stamina will suit, and he gets the nod over Seven Towers, who may need another run to put him spot on after missing last season altogether.

2.15 SEAN GRAHAM BOOKMAKERS HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 3YO 2m Penalty Value £2,443

1	00	BAYLHAM (F24) (Tough Construction) J Goldie 10 12	O McPhail (5)
2		CAPTAIN BRADY (F402) (F Brady) J Goldie 10 12	S Taylor
3	6	CURRICULUS (36) (Mrs D Miller) M Todhunter 10 12	C McCormack (5)
4		DAVE THE BANK (F18) (D Gallagher) A Bailey 10 12	S Durack
5		ENVOY (F49) (G Reed) C Thornton 10 12	M Foster
6	222	LAMBRINI LAD (41) (Halewood International) A Bailey 10 12	B Powell B
7	6	POLO VENTURE (31) (Million In Mind Partnership (6)) M Hammond 10 12	B Harding
8		SAINTES (F39) (J Goldie) J Goldie 10 12	A Dobbin
9	26	THANKS KEITH (9) (BF) (Clayton Bigley Partnership) J J O'Neill 10 12	L Cooper (7) B
10	0	THE PRESIDENT (31) (North Racing) Mrs M Reveley 10 12	P Niven
11		BEAU VIENNA (F10) (Forth Partnership) A Dickman 10 7	O Parker
12		INCHAHOY (F40) (Mrs A Doran) Miss L Perratt 10 7	B Storey

– 12 declared –

BETTING: 7-2 Thanks Keith, 4-1 The President, 5-1 Saintes, 11-2 Lambrini Lad, 6-1 Polo Venture, 10-1 Curriculus, 12-1 Dave The Bank, 25-1 others

1997: Count Tony 10 12 R Garritty 6-4 fav (M Hammond) 10 ran

FORM VERDICT

Thanks Keith, a moderate plodder on the Flat, failed to fulfil his hurdle debut promise last time and may not confirm Wetherby superiority over either Polo Venture or THE PRESIDENT. Micky Hammond expects Polo Venture to improve for waiting tactics out The President is capable of leaving behind his first effort over hurdles, when he was partnered by a 5lb claimer.

2.45 SEAN GRAHAM TELEPHONE BETTING NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE (C) £6,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £4,110

1	020-12	GOOD DAY (71) (D) (Mrs A C Robson) A Whillans 4 11 10	I Jardine (7)
2	46140	MR CAVALLO (5) (D) (P J S Russell) Miss L Russell 6 11 10	C McCormack (5)
3	5/100P	THORNTOUN HOUSE (5) (D) (W M Johnstone) J Goldie 5 11 2	O McPhail (5) V
4	/3332-	TO-DAY TO-DAY (258) (Col D C Greig) L Lungo 5 11 1	R Supple
5	/560-5	KIMDALOO (38) (Mr & Mrs R A Green) C Parker 6 10 0	B Storey
6	345542	MY SALTARELLO (8) (BF) (T A Barnes) M Barnes 4 10 0	S Taylor

– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: My Saltarello 9st 10lb.

BETTING: 2-1 To-Day To-Day, 5-2 Good Day, 11-2 My Saltarello, 6-1 Mr Cavallo, 7-1 Kimdaloo, 10-1 Thorntoun House

1997: no corresponding race

FORM VERDICT

The vote goes to GOOD DAY, who did nothing wrong when a clear second in a Sedgefield novice hurdle to a horse who won a fair handicap next time out. The tough Mr Cavallo is below par at present and a bigger threat could be To-Day To-Day, who perhaps needed time to acclimatise last season when performing below his trainer's expectations.

3.15 SEAN GRAHAM HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £3,704

1	1F15-3	CHIPPED OUT (14) (D) (Domino Racing) M Todhunter 8 12 0	C McCormack (5)
2	1U5U-0	NICHOLAS PLANT (14) (CD) (Mrs M F Paterson) J Goldie 9 11 9	O McPhail (5)
3	F444-1	BURNT IMP (USA) (14) (CD) (N B Mason) G M Moore 8 11 8	J Callaghan
4	5/204-	STORMY CORAL (189) (CD) (Mr & Mrs R A Green) C Parker 8 11 2	B Storey
5	UF5-13	RIVER UNSHION (21) (D) (R J Crake) J H Johnson 8 10 12	D Parker
6	2031-1	SUPREME SOVIET (163) (D) (Campbell & partners) A Whillans 8 10 9	A Dobbin

– 6 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Burnt Imp, 4-1 River Unshion, Supreme Soviet, 9-2 Chipped Out, 6-1 Nicholas Plant, 7-1 Stormy Coral

1997: Any Port 7 10 7 Mr R P McNally (7) 5-1 (A J Martin, Ir) 6 ran

FORM VERDICT

CHIPPED OUT jumped well when an encouraging third to Burnt Imp on his reappearance at Kelso and has a solid chance of turning tables, although that rival is a doughty battler when in the mood and should not be underestimated. Supreme Soviet is a well handicapped novice who represents a big threat if fit.

3.45 SEAN GRAHAM BOOKMAKERS HANDICAP HURDLE (D) £5,000 3m 110yds Pen Value £3,470 C4

1	F216-3	MENSHAAR (USA) (9) (C) (D) (Miss E Blumberg) L Lungo 6 11 10 *White, Dark Green braces, striped sleeves and cap*	R Supple
2	24113	THE NEXT WALTZ (16) (Mrs M Royds) L Lungo 7 11 5 *Pink, White stripe, armlets and cap*	Mr B Gibson (7)
3	42663-	JUDICIOUS CAPTAIN (204) (CD) (J Adam) J Adam 11 11 3 *Red, Brown sleeves, Red armlets, White cap*	B Powell
4	0050-1	SLEEPY RIVER (14) (J P McManus) J J O'Neill 7 10 8 *Emerald Green, Yellow hoops, White cap*	R McGrath
5	412F-2	MONTE CRESTA (28) (Mrs J Etherton) Mrs S Bradburne 5 10 8 *Brown, Grey cap*	Mr M Bradburne (5)
6	22-221	VALIANT DASH (35) (D) (J Goldie) J Goldie 12 10 4 *Saxe Blue, Yellow armlets, Blue and Red quartered cap*	O McPhail (5)
7	143-32	PRIMITIVE HEART (14) (Thistle Racing) H Alexander 6 10 4 *Dark Green, Purple halved sleeves, Purple cap*	S Durack
6	222-30	VILPRANO (5) (D) (Vilprano Partnership) D Moffatt 1 10 2 *light blue, white triple diamond, white and Yellow diabolo on sleeves, Light Blue and Yellow quartered cap*	D J Moffatt

– 8 declared –

BETTING: 3-1 Sleepy River, 4-1 The Next Waltz, 9-2 Valiant Dash, 5-1 Primitive Heart, 6-1 Monte Cresta, 10-1 Menshaar, 12-1 Judicious Captain, Vilprano

1997: Bridle Path 6 11 4 R Garritty 7-4 jt fav (T Easterby) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

Menshaar: Progressive sort last term, rounding off with Hexham 3m win from 7lb lower. Disappointing on reappearance at Haydock and plenty to do here

The Next Waltz: Five-time winner this term and still on upgrade when 5 lengths third to Sharp Command at Kelso (2m 5½f). Longer trip should suit and could take a hand

Judicious Captain: Useful chaser over last two seasons. Unknown quantity over hurdles now, but goes particularly well in the mud

Sleepy River: Useful staying hurdler for Arthur Moore in Ireland two seasons ago. First form since when beating Primitive Heart 3½ lengths at Kelso (2m 6f, soft). 6lb higher here but possibly capable of further improvement over longer trip

Monte Cresta: Promising reappearance when beaten 5 lengths by The Next Waltz at Kelso (2m 6f, heavy) on same course and closely weighted with winner here

Valiant Dash: First win for a long time when beating Our Kris neck at Hexham (3m, good to soft). 2lb higher here and likely to find the company tougher

Primitive Heart: Progressing steadily and battled well when beaten 3½ lengths by Sleepy River at Kelso (2m 6f). Could struggle to turn tables on only 4lb better terms

Vilprano: Improved performer over longer trips last term, scoring at Newcastle (3m) in February from 9lb lower. Hard to fancy after dismal Carlisle show on Monday

VERDICT: SLEEPY RIVER bounced right back to form at Kelso and could pay to follow now that he has acclimatised. He was rated 20lb higher in Ireland two seasons ago and comes from a yard in excellent form. Primitive Heart had the advantage of a previous outing last time and appears unlikely to reverse placings only slightly better terms.

RESULTS

CHELTENHAM

Going: Good to soft (Good in places)

1.15: 1. TAMARINDO (Mr A Farrant) 9-2; 2. Cavalero 5-6 fav; 3. Oban 11-1. 6 ran. 7, 8. (M Pipe, Wellington). Tote: £4.90; £2.00, £1.30. DF: £2.70. CSF: £7.53.

1.50: 1. PREMIER GENERATION (M A Fitzgerald) 100-30 fav; 2. Explain This 11-1; 3. Davoski 7-1. 17 ran. 2, 2½. (N Henderson, Lambourn). Tote: £5.90; £1.70, £3.00, £1.70, £1.90. DF: £38.90. CSF: £31.85. Tricast: £227.02. Trifecta: £229.70.

2.25: 1. GREEN GREEN DESERT (J Tizzard) 6-1; 2. Hurricane Lamp 100-30; 3. Forestal 5-4 fav. 5 ran. 7, 5. (P Nicholls, Shepton Mallet). Tote: £5.10; £2.10, £1.70. DF: £20.00. CSF: £22.95.

3.00: 1. SPENDID (A Maguire) 100-30; 2. Moscow Express 100-30; 3. Song Of The Sword 7-4 fav. 5 ran. 2, 20. (O Nicholson, Temple Guiting). Tote: £4.00; £1.80, £1.90. DF: £8.80. CSF: £12.48.

3.35: 1. LINDEN'S LOTTO (P Carberry) 8-1; 2. Fiftysevenchannels 9-1; 3. Lucky Town 7-2. 14 ran. 11-4 fav McGregor The Third (5th). ½, 5. (A Martin, Kildalkey Co Meath). Tote: £7.70; £2.50, £2.90, £2.20. DF: £33.40. CSF: £48.82.

4.05: 1. PAPO KHARISMA (R Widger) 3-1 fav; 2. Never In Debt 6-1; 3. Zaffaran Run 12-1. 22 ran. 7, ½. (P Hobbs, Minehead). Tote: £3.80; £1.70, £2.00, £3.50, £9.80. DF: £10.60. CSF: £17.41. Tricast: £198.86.

Jackpot: [illegible]; £25,218.52 carried forward to Cheltenham today.

Placepot: £80.90. Quadpot: £33.60.

Place 6: £56.71. Place 5: £48.79.

NEWCASTLE

Going: Good (Good to Soft in places)

12.35: 1. [illegible] (R McGrath) 2-1; 2. Saxon Victory 16-1; 3. Free 4-5 fav. 6 ran. 10, 2½. (J J O'Neill, Penrith). Tote: £2.80; £1.10, £1.80, £1.30. DF: £22.80. CSF: £24.85.

1.30: 1. MASTER NOVA (R Garritty) 20-1; 2. Bold Action 14-1; 3. What A Fiddler 11-4. 12 ran. 13-8 fav Bobby Grant (pulled up). [illegible] (Mrs J Camacho, Malton). Tote: £24.30; £3.20, £4.30, £1.90. DF: £80.40. CSF: £218.95.

2.05: 1. NOSHINANNIKIN (F Leahy) 5-2; 2. Formidable Partner 5-1; 3. Askrigg Venture 25-1. 13 ran. 13-8 fav Arrange (4th). 10, 2½. (M W Easterby, Sheriff Hutton). Tote: £4.00; £1.40, £2.10, £2.40. DF: £11.30. CSF: £16.57. NR: Castletown Count.

2.40: 1. MINSTER GLORY (R McGrath) 9-2; 2. [illegible] 20-1; 3. La Riviera 13-2. 9 ran. 11-4 fav Prince Of Saints (6th). 5, nk. (M W Easterby, Sheriff Hutton). Tote: £6.50; £2.00, £4.70, £1.50. DF: £38.90. CSF: £58.20. Tricast: £503.40. NR: Oscail An Doras.

3.15: 1. WOODFIELD GALE (Mr A Dempsey) 6-5 fav; 2. Joe Buzz 5-4; 3. Onyourown 7-1. 6 ran. Nk, 3½. (Mrs M Reveley, Saltburn). Tote: £2.00; £2.40, £1.10. DF: £1.30. CSF: £2.80. NR: Irish Wildcard.

3.45: 1. PUREVALUE (P Niven) 11-4; 2. Chitrabell 11-4; 3. Gaelic Blue 7-4 fav. 6 ran. 1, 10. (M W Easterby, Sheriff Hutton). Tote: £3.50; £2.20, £2.10. DF: £5.40. CSF: £9.10.

Placepot: £83.80. Quadpot: £21.60.

Place 6: £45.38. Place 5: £40.51.

SOUTHWELL

Going: Standard

12.05: 1. SILENT WARNING (Mr C Vigors) Evens fav; 2. Doc Ryan's 12-1; 3. Evezio Rufo 10-1. 13 ran. 5, 6. (Sir Mark Prescott). Tote: £1.90; £1.10, £4.90, £2.10. DF: £32.00. CSF: £12.49. Tricast: £83.28.

12.35: 1. TAYSEER (T Sprake) 7-2; 2. Royal Cascade 12-1; 3. Tailored Times 6-1. 15 ran. 100-30 fav Malia (6th). 2, 3. (W Muir). Tote: £3.90; £1.80, £3.20, £3.20. DF: £21.60. CSF: £38.37. NR: Lachesis.

1.05: 1. TOPTON (J Quinn) 6-1; 2. Elton Ledger 16-1; 3. Sharp Scotch 8-1; 4. Mustang 16-1. 16 ran. 5-1 fav Kosevo. 3, 5. (P Howling). Tote: £8.10; £1.10, £2.90, £3.80, £5.50. DF: £42.80. CSF: £96.80. Tricast: £590.57.

1.40: 1. [illegible]; 2. [illegible]wind 13-2; 3. Sharp Hint 12-1. 15 ran. 100-30 fav Most Respectful (4th). 3½, nk. (J Berry). Tote: £6.10; £3.80, £1.70, £5.10. DF: £20.50. CSF: £72.42.

2.15: 1. CELTIC SEAL (J Edmunds) 25-1; 2. Lady Caroline 9-4 fav; 3. Trojan Girl 3-1. 17 ran. Nk, 3. ([illegible]). Tote: [illegible] £1.60, £1.20. DF: £56.80. CSF: £70.43.

2.50: 1. VALE OF LEVEN (A McCarthy) 8-1; 2. Love Diamonds 14-1; 3. Chalcedony 33-1. 14 ran. 11-4 jt favs Eyeballs Out, Indian Swinger. Nk, 2½. (K Ryan). Tote: £7.00; £2.20, £4.50, £10.50. DF: £58.10. CSF: £83.73. Tricast: £2,478.01.

3.25: 1. SWISS TONI (A Nicholls) 5-1; 2. Nathan's Hero 9-4 fav; 3. Sounds Cool 33-1. 15 ran. ½, 2. (D Nicholls). Tote: £5.60; £2.50, [illegible]. NR: Crash Call Lady.

3.55: 1. LOVE ACADEMY (R Fitzpatrick) 9-4 fav; 2. Maftesmia 16-1; 3. Kingdom Ruby 10-1. 15 ran. Hd, 4. (M Johnston). Tote: £3.10; £1.70, £3.70, £4.30. DF: £28.30. CSF: £42.25. Tricast: £268.34. NR: Two Williams. Two Williams ([illegible]) was withdrawn [illegible] under orders. Rule 4 applies to all bets. Deduction 5p in the pound.

Placepot: £120.30. Quadpot: £42.90.

Place 6: £332.94. Place 5: £218.57.

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THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

Difficult Britain debut for Long

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

ONLY PRIDE to play for. It is one of the boariest and most vacuous clichés in sport, but Great Britain need to invest it with some meaning today if the season is not to end on a profoundly depressing note. Andy Goodway's side goes into the third Test at Watford this evening with a home series against New Zealand already lost – for the first time in 27 years.

The last time they were 2-0 down to the Kiwis, in New Zealand two years ago, they lost the third Test by 20 clear points. Any similar scoreline today will mean that this will go down as Great Britain's worst series performance for a very long time.

The portents are not good, not good at all. On top of the expected absence of Paul Newlove and Adrian Morley, Goodway yesterday ruled out Iestyn Harris and Keiron Cunningham as well.

That, assuming that it is the true situation, will mean a belated first appearance in the series for Sean Long, normally a scrum-half for St Helens, but here pressed into service at stand-off. Long's pace and powers of improvisation were worth a run, possibly off the bench, earlier in the series, but he makes his bow today in difficult circumstances, alongside a player of similar style in Tony Smith.

Long got a taste of Test rugby against Australia last year, but this match marks a demanding debut for Terry Newton, the Leeds hooker who only turned 20 last Saturday and who has still started only 26 Super League games for his club.

Cunningham came into the series with a knee injury and has accumulated others along the way, so it was always a fair bet that he would have to be replaced at some stage.

He was still close to being Britain's most effective player in the defeat at Bolton, but Goodway rates Newton highly, having included him in the original squad ahead of several more experienced and obvious options.

"When we picked 23 players for the series, we considered them all to be Test players and we have faith in their ability," Goodway said.

"It is a serious problem to have four players out injured, but these players who will replace them are of international quality."

Phil Lowe, the England team manager, agreed with the Goodway assertion, saying: "We're confident in the other players in the squad. We picked them in the first place because we thought they were good players. If any of these four don't make it, they will be given a chance to prove themselves."

Newton, considered a back-row forward when Leeds won a tug-of-war with Warrington to sign him three seasons ago, but successfully converted to hooker, said: "This is the chance I've been waiting for and I want to show people what I'm made of. I'll give more than 100 per cent."

The other changes from the second Test team show Terry O'Connor promoted to the starting line-up, with Darren Fleary and Mike Forshaw on the bench and Neil Cowie omitted altogether.

Goodway has kept faith with the left-wing partnership of Keith Senior and Francis Cummins, although it was found wanting defensively last Saturday. The only alternative from within the squad would have been to draft Lee Gilmour into a centre role he has only occasionally filled for Wigan, but he remains among the substitutes.

Alongside all this, the Kiwis' selection process has been simplicity itself. They have brought in Craig Smith as an extra prop on the bench, partly in order to give their captain, Quentin Pongia, the chance of a rest.

Pongia has played every minute of the first two Tests, a remarkable feat for an international prop in the modern game. It might be in Frank Endacott's mind to give him a breather at Vicarage Road; a team of wild horses has been hired to drag him from the pitch.

Ticket sales for today's game in Watford have reached 12,500 and organisers are hoping that they will attract a flurry of late interest in an area not usually associated with the 13-a-side code.

GREAT BRITAIN v NEW ZEALAND

Probable teams for third Lincoln Test at Vicarage Road, Watford

Radlinski	Wigan	1	Barnett		Sydney City
Robinson	Wigan	2	Hoppe		Auckland
Connolly	Wigan	3	K Iro		Auckland
Senior	Sheffield	4	Wikki		Canberra
Cummins	Leeds	5	Halligan		Canterbury
Long	St Helens	6	R Paul		Bradford
T Smith	Wigan	7	Jones		Auckland
O'Connor	Wigan	8	Vagana		Auckland
Newton	Leeds	9	Eru		Auckland
Laughton	Sheffield	10	Pongia		Auckland (capt)
Joynt	St Helens	11	Kearney		Auckland
Sculthorpe	St Helens	12	McCracken		Parramatta
Farrell	Wigan (capt)	13	Swann		Auckland

Substitutes: Fleary (Leeds), Forshaw (Bradford), Haughton (Wigan), Gilmour (Wigan).

Substitutes: H Paul (Wigan), Cayless (Parramatta), Peiatua (Penrith), C Smith (Illawarra).

Referee: B Harrigan (Aus) **Kick-off:** 6pm. **Sky Sport 1** 5.30pm

Greg Rusedski concentrates on his return during yesterday's defeat of the Canadian Daniel Nestor in the Stockholm Open *AP*

Rusedski injured in victory

TENNIS

BY DERRICK WHYTE in Stockholm

GREG RUSEDSKI braved injury to move a step nearer the ATP World Championship in Hanover later this month.

The British No 2 hurt a muscle in his back during a hard-fought 7-6, 1-6, 6-3 victory over the Canadian Daniel Nestor in the quarter-finals of the Stockholm Open. But Rusedski, who needs to reach Sunday's final to be assured of a place in the World Championship, says he is ready to play through the pain barrier in tomorrow's semi-final to make sure he books his berth at Hanover.

The world No 11 faces either Thomas Johansson or Jason Stoltenberg in the last four and could meet the British No 1, Tim Henman, who takes on Magnus Gustafsson tonight, in the final.

Rusedski said he felt a twinge of pain on his right side in today's first set. He took some anti-inflammatory pills on court following the third game of the second set. "It got tight and I felt it pull," said Rusedski. "The trainer said it was just over-use. He doesn't feel there is anything that can be damaged. It should be fine in a few days."

Rusedski got into trouble in the fifth game when he had to save four break-points before escaping for a 3-2 lead after Nestor sent a return long. But Nestor first fought back to force a tie-break – only to be dominated easily by Rusedski – then broke early to take a 2-0 lead and stretch that margin to 5-1 with another break. He won the last 10 points in a row to level the match at a set each. The third set turned on a sixth game that lasted for more than 10 minutes.

Nestor, like Rusedski a left-hander, wasted a 40-0 lead, then had to save four break-points against him before Rusedski finally grabbed a 4-2 lead as his opponent netted a volley. Rusedski then served out his next two games for the win.

"I knew what to expect," Rusedski said. "It was like playing myself. But I think I move better than him and I'm more intense in some situations."

Rusedski said the sixth game of the final set was important. "I finally got a ball that I could chip low enough down the line," said the Briton. "It was satisfying, that was a key game and match could have gone either way.

"It's frustrating the way Daniel plays. It's always tough for a leftie to play another leftie. You have to give him a lot of respect on an indoor court. I managed to get the only break in the third set and got the win."

If Henman reaches the semi-finals he will have booked one of the last two places for Hanover.

Todd Martin stopped Takao Suzuki's run in the Stockholm Open earlier yesterday, beating the Japanese qualifier 6-3, 6-4 in the first quarter-final.

Martin broke Suzuki twice in game seven and nine to win the first set. After trading service breaks early in the second set, Martin broke Suzuki again in the last game. Suzuki fell behind 15-40 after two superb cross-court returns by Martin. The American clinched the match with a perfect lob.

"The key point of the game came at 15 all in the last game, when I hit a passing shot for a winner," Martin said. "That gave me a boost and took the wind out of him."

"I feel I'm playing great, better than a few years ago. I just hope it continues for the rest of the week and that it doesn't vanish come 1999."

Martin, who reached the 1996 final here but lost to Thomas Enqvist, will play the winner between Tim Henman and Magnus Gustafsson.

S Africans lift Epsom

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

WHILE THE Wales rugby union side at Wembley will be far from relishing the arrival of the all-conquering South Africans today, the contribution of some of the Springboks' hockey playing countrymen at Epsom has been a welcomed tonic for captain Chris Allcock's team.

Five South Africans are expected to start Epsom's EHA Cup game against Winchester of the Premier League tomorrow and Allcock attests to their impact in both that competition and the Hampshire-Surrey Regional League.

"We have a good team spirit and we are now getting it together," said Allcock, who is back at the Surrey club after stints at Slough and Hounslow. "It has been a gradual process which all started with the arrival of Spingbok Murray Smith."

Smith, currently studying medicine in Dublin, flies in each weekend and has been the catalyst for the arrival of other South Africans, including Charles Teversham from the Atlanta Olympic squad. Unlike the National League, there are no restrictions on the number of non-EU overseas players in the Cup, hence the high numbers of South Africans expected to start against Winchester.

Another recent returnee to Epsom, on maximum points in the league and who today visit Portsmouth, is Jon Clark, the former England indoor goalkeeper. Clark has seen action with Mid-Surrey and Slough and coached the US national squad at the Atlanta Olympics.

Allcock summed up the weekend: "Our priority is obviously the league. Realistically, we are not going to win the EHA Cup but if we could get through this round to round four, which would be the furthest Epsom have ever been, then I would say we would be reasonably content.

"We would like to win the league but we are up against Old Georgians, also on 100 per cent, who, shall we say, seem to have funds available and are said to be offering quite ridiculous amounts for players."

Westwood unleashes six-birdie barrage

GOLF

ENGLAND'S Lee Westwood, aiming for his third straight victory in the Taiehiyo Masters, charged back into contention with six birdies in yesterday's second round.

Westwood hit the day's best score of a five-under 67 to finish on 139 with Japan's Ryoken Kawagishi and the first-round leader Eduardo Herrera, of Colombia, four shots behind the new leader Nobuo Serizawa, of Japan. Serizawa shot a 68 after a first-round 67 to leave him three shots ahead.

"I was very pleased with my round, in particular my putting," said Serizawa, who is gunning for his fifth career victory on the Japan PGA tour.

Frankie Minoza, of the Philippines, carded three birdies and an eagle – as well as three bogeys – for a 70 to be in a tie for second place on 138 with Tateo Ozakiof Japan.

This year's Masters and British Open champion, Mark O'Meara, struggled with a 72 to stand in 41st place.

■ New Zealand's Marnie McGuire said she could lead all the way to the title after staying in front through the second round of the women's Australian Open yesterday. McGuire leads by two from Australia's Jan Stephenson and Corinne Dibnah.

Nemeth's overseas players problem

BASKETBALL

BY RICHARD TAYLOR

IF YOU want to play for England, play abroad. The squad for the European Championship games against Denmark, Spain and Ukraine this month confirms that English fans no longer have the opportunity to watch the best English players.

The England coach, Laszlo Nemeth, has named 12 players based overseas in a squad of 15. The exceptions are Manchester's Ronnie Baker, Derby's Yorick Williams and Peter Scantlebury, England's most capped player, who a week ago thought his international career was over when he left the Newcastle Eagles but has now signed for the Sheffield Sharks. The three maintain a tenuous presence for the Budweiser League, which is dominated by up to five Americans per team. Nemeth axed eight league players from his original squad of 24.

Nemeth's task is to generate teamwork from men who rarely see each other, let alone play together. He will name 12 to face Denmark in Birmingham on 25 November, then Spain in Leon on the 28 November and Ukraine in Kiev on 2 December.

Nemeth has watched most of the overseas players in recent weeks and will be at league games this weekend to see Baker, Scantlebury and Williams. Nemeth said: "I need to be certain that I choose the right players. We have to perform as a unit on the floor."

ENGLAND SQUAD: J Amaechi (Tau Vitoria, Sp), R Baker (Manchester Giants), A Betts (Bologna, It), S Bucknall (Fabriano, It), R Carter (Oberwald, Aut), S Chenng (Ypres, Bel), S Dunkley (US), A Gardiner (Mevelgem, Bel), S Hansell (Verona, It), C Haslam (Apollon, Gr), D Herriman (Den Helder, Neth), R Huggins (Antwerp, Bel), P Scantlebury (Sheffield Sharks), J Turner (Ghent, Bel), Y Williams (Derby Storm)

Finn fights hormone allegations

SKIING

A PROSECUTOR yesterday charged the Finnish news agency STT with libel for reporting that the top Finnish skier Jari Rasanen had bought illegal growth hormones.

STT said that Rasanen had bought growth hormones on 24 January that are banned for competing athletes. The hormones had been stolen from a hospital in Sweden, the report said. STT also claimed that Finnish Ski Federation officials had been planning to buy large amounts of the performance enhancing substances.

However, after investigations in Finland and Sweden, Finnish police said they found no evidence of either Rasanen or Finnish ski officials being involved in, or planning, the purchase of hormones.

STT has not given sources for its report. In January it said it would reveal the names of the officials and details of Rasanen's alleged purchase, but so far has not done so. The writer of the STT report, Johann Aatsalo-Sallinen, and editor-in-chief, Kari Vaisanen, have both been charged with libel.

Rasanen, a relay silver medallist in the World Championships last year, has vehemently denied the allegations. He has threatened to sue STT for up to 2 million markkaa (£242,000).

11-year-old Australian girl set for tournament bout

BOXING

AN 11-YEAR-OLD girl is set to fight in a tournament on Australia's Gold Coast which has been banned by one government and condemned by medical authorities. Zoe Norford, 11, has nominated for the girls under-13 championship of the breakaway Australian Amateur Boxing League next week, an official said yesterday.

"There is nothing illegal about what we are doing," said the AABL secretary, Dennis Magnay. He admitted the organisation was forced to move the event from New South Wales to neighbouring Queensland, because laws against female boxing existed in the former.

He conceded that some people might be shocked by the idea of young girls boxing. "I understand how it can be a shock to their systems because it's something new but given a few years it will be absolutely nothing," Magnay said. "We make sure that they are well protected – that's the main thing. They wear a headguard, a compulsory breast protector, slightly softer gloves and box shorter rounds than the boys."

The Australian Medical Association is opposed to all boxing but will campaign to ban all fighters under 18 years. The AMA's national president, David Brand, said young boxers exhibited early evidence of brain damage in some studies, despite not being able to punch as hard as older fighters.

The officially sanctioned Amateur Boxing Union of Australia does not endorse female boxers.

SPORTING DIGEST

BADMINTON

INTERNATIONAL SERIES (St Austell) Fourth match (of six): China 3 England 2. Mixed doubles (English names first): C Hunt and S Sankey bt Y Zhang and L Gao 10-15 15-7 15-4; **Women's singles:** R Pantaney lost to C Yang 8-11 5-11; **Men's singles:** R Nock lost to X Xia 5-15 5-15. **Women's doubles:** E Miles and S Sankey lost to Y Lu and L Gao 3-15 8-15; **Men's doubles:** S Archer/C Hunt bt Y Fan and S Jian 15-11 15-11. *(China lead series 4-0).*

BASKETBALL

A cocktail waitress has filed a law suit against the controversial Chicago Bulls forward Dennis Rodman, after he allegedly stuffed a $100 bill down her blouse and grabbed her breast. Susan Patterson of West Hollywood is also alleging assault, battery, negligence, false imprisonment and emotional distress following a confrontation with Rodman in October.

The England captain, Peter Scantlebury, has signed for Sheffield Sharks and could make his debut tomorrow against Greater London Leopards.

Edinburgh Rocks have signed the former Chester Jets point guard Sean Bell.

MEN'S EUROLEAGUE Group A: Varese (It) 75 Zalgiris Kaunas (Lith) 84; Saratov *(Rus) 83 Pau Orthez (Fr) 86 (ot); Tau Ceramica* (Sp) 69 Fenebahce (Turk) 57. **Group B:** Efes Pilsen (Tur) 81 Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr) 74; TDK Manresa (Sp) 67 Cibona Zagreb (Croa) 79. **Group C:** Kinder Bologna (It) 62 KK Zadar (Croa) 53; Olympiakos Piraeus (Gr) 94 Alba Berlin (Ger) 65; Ulkerspor (Tur) 64 CSK Moscow (Rus) 91. **Group D:** Real Madrid 67 Olimpia Ljubljana (Sloven) 68.

FOOTBALL

Wolves yesterday signed the German midfielder Robert Niestroj from Fortuna Düsseldorf for a fee which could rise to £500,000 depending on appearances. Niestroj, 23, who has signed a three-and-half year contract, is unlikely to make his debut at Norwich today as international clearance is required from Germany.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP Rearranged fixtures: Wed 9 Dec Chelsea v Aston Villa *(7.45)*; **Sun 15 Dec** Aston Villa v Arsenal *(3.0)*.

HUNGARY SQUAD (v Switzerland, Budapest, 18 Nov): Kiraly (Hertha Berlin), Babos (MTK Budapest); Lakos (Gyor ETO), Korsos (Gyor ETO), V Sebok (Ujpest), C Feher (Ujpest), Hrutka (Kaiserslautern), Matyus (Ferencvaros), Szelesres (MTK Budapest); Iles (MTK Budapest), Dardai (Hertha Berlin), Pisont (Eintracht Frankfurt), Lendvai (Ferencvaros), Somogyi (Gyor ETO), Toth (Ujpest), Vincze (Ferencvaros), T Petro (Ujpest); Egressy (Olosgyor), M Feher (Porto), Waltner (Videoton), Herczeg (Ujpest), J Sebok (Zalaegerszeg).

THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS

DUTCH LEAGUE: PSV Eindhoven 3 (Nilis 11, 35; Van Nistelrooij 80); Vitesse Arnhem 1 (Jochemsen 72).

ITALIAN CUP Third round, second leg: AS Roma 1 Atalanta 1 *(agg: 2-2 aet. Atalanta win 5-4 on pens).*

GULF CUP (Manama, Bahrain): Kuwait 4 United Arab Emirates 1; Bahrain 2 Oman 2 *(Kuwait win tournament).*

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Dundalk 0 Finn Harps 0.

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP First-round replay: Welling 2 Langney Sports 1.

GOLF

TAIHEIYO MASTERS (Gotemba, Japan) Leading second-round scores (Japan names stated): 133 N Serizawa 67 68; 138 F Minoza (Phil) 68 70, T Ozaki 68 70; 139 L Westwood (GB) 72 67, R Kawagishi 67 72, E Herrera (Col) 65 74. **Selected GB:** 141 A Coltart 69 72; 142 D Clarke 71 71.

WOMEN'S AUSTRALIAN OPEN (Melbourne) Leading second-round scores (Aus unless stated): 144 M McGuire (NZ) 72 72; 146 C Dibnah 74 72, J Stephenson 74 72; 147 L Neumann (Swe) 73 74; 148 X Webb 78 70, M-J Rouleau (Can) 75 73; 149 K Robbins (US) 75 74, J Y Lee (S Kor) 74 75. **Selected GB:** 150 C Duffy 79 71, J Crowe 76 74; 156 S Bennett 75 81; 173 L Irvine 86 87. *(Second round incomplete due to rain).*

ICE HOCKEY

NHL: Washington 0 Buffalo 2; NY Islanders 4 Montreal 0; Ottawa 1 Edmonton 1 (ot); Philadelphia 1 Florida 2; Chicago 3 Toronto 10; Calgary 3 Vancouver 4; Los Angeles 1 Nashville 3; San Jose 3 Carolina 0.

BENSON AND HEDGES CUP Semi-finals (Thursday): Nottingham Panthers 3 Manchester Storm 1 (agg: 5-4); London Knights 0 Ayr Scottish Eagles 6 (agg: 4-12).

ICE SKATING

NATIONS CUP (Gelsenkirchen, Ger) Men: Short Programme: 1 A Yagudin (Rus) 0.5 factored placings; 2 A Abt (Rus) 1.0; 3 A Vlascenko (Ger) 1.5.

Ice Dance: Compulsory Dance: 1 A Krylova and O Ovsiannikov (Rus) 0.4; 2 S L Bourne and V Kraatz (Can) 0.8; 3 K Winkler and R Lohse (Ger) 1.2.

RUGBY UNION

TOUR MATCH (Thursday): Oxford University 8 Fiji 46.

SNOOKER

BENSON AND HEDGES CHAMPIONSHIP (Malvern) Final: O Gray (Eng) bt D Harold (Eng) 9-6.

SUMO

KYUSHU GRAND TOURNAMENT (Fukuoka, Japan) Results after Day Six (of 15): Ozeki (won 3, lost 3) bt Mainouni (Jorya) (1-5): Akinoshu (1-5) bt Tokitsuumi (2-4); Kotonishiki (6-0) bt Aganowaka (2-4); Terao (4-2) bt Gojoro (3-3); Asanosho (2-4) bt Mitotzumi (2-4); Minatofuji (4-2) bt Kotoryu (4-2); Oginishiki (4-2) bt Kyokushuzan (2-4); Asahiyuzaka (2-4) bt Aoghyama (2-4); Tosamouni (5-1) bt Wakanosato (3-3); Akinoshima (2-4) bt Wakanojo (2-4); Toki (3-3) bt Shikishima (2-4); Tamakasuga (5-1) bt Tochinonada (3-3); Dejima (3-3) bt Hamanoshima (1-5); Tochiazuma (3-3) bt Kotonowaka (3-3); Musoyama (5-1) bt Chiyotaikai (4-2); Higonoumi (0-6) bt Takatorikl (4-2); Musashimaru (6-0) bt Kaio (5-1); Takanonami (4-2) bt Kaiho (0-6); Takanohana (4-2) bt Ganyu (1-5); Wakanohana (5-1) bt Tochinowaka (0-6).

TENNIS

Chester's British Under-18 champion, Mark Hilton, will be among seven wild-card entrants aged between 16 and 18 at the British National Championships at Telford starting on 17 November. The other selections are Lee Childs of Bridgewater, Barry Fulcher and James Auckland, both from Norwich, Helen Reesby from Nottingham, Heidi Farr of Guildford and Claire Seal from Leicester. For the first time since 1995 neither Tim Henman nor Greg Rusedski will compete.

STOCKHOLM MEN'S OPEN Singles, second round: T Johansson (Swe) bt G Grant (US) 6-2 6-1; J Stoltenberg (Aus) bt H Dreekmann (Ger) 6-2 6-2 **Quarter-finals:** T Martin (US) bt T Suzuki (Japan) 6-3 6-4; G Rusedski (GB) bt O Nestor (Can) 7-6 1-6 6-3.

KREMLIN CUP (Moscow) Men's singles, quarter-finals: M Rosset (Swit) bt J Kroslak (Slovak) 6-2 6-4; Y Kafelnikov (Rus) bt G Raoux (Fr) 6-1 6-1.

CHEVROLET MEN'S CUP (Santiago, Chile) Singles, second round: M Rios (Chi) bt M Rodriguez (Arg) 6-2 6-2; J A Marin (CR) bt F Squillare (Arg) 6-4, 4-6, 6-4; J Courier (US) bt D Hrbaty (Slovak) 7-6 6-4; F Mantilla (Sp) bt E Medica (Arg) 6-0 6-1.

WOMEN'S ADVANTA CHAMPIONSHIP (Philadelphia) Singles, second round: A Frazier (US) bt P Schnyder (Swit) 6-3 6-1; M Seles (US) bt Ai Sugiyama (Japan) 6-3 7-5; S Graf (Ger) bt E Likhovtseva (Rus) 6-6 6-4.

VOLLEYBALL

MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Kobe, Japan) Preliminary round results: Group A Korea 3 Egypt 0 (15-10 15-7 15-6); Spain 3 Japan 0 (15-11 15-9 15-13). **Group B** Italy 3 Canada 0 (15-10 15-13 15-2); USA 3 Thailand 0 (15-3 15-9 15-1). **Group C** China 3 Ukraine 1 (14-16 15-13 15-12 15-8), Netherlands 3 Czech Republic 1 (15-9 13-15 15-13 15-4). **Group D** Argentina 3 Iran 0 (15-9 15-3 15-7); Cuba 3 Poland 0 (15-10 15-9 15-10). **Group E** Bulgaria 3 Algeria 0 (15-6 15-12 15-13); Brazil 3 Greece 0 (15-6 15-13 15-6). **Group F** Yugoslavia 3 Australia 0 (16-14 15-5 15-4); Russia 3 Turkey 0 (15-6 15-7 15-6).

WEIGHTLIFTING

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Lahti, Fin) Results: Women: 69 kg 1 W Tang (China) 110.0kg snatch, 130.0kg clean and jerk, 240.0kg total lift; 2 M-Y Wu (Tai) 100.0, 127.5, 227.5; 3 I Kasimova (Rus) 97.5, 127.5, 225.0; 4 E Markus (Hun) 102.5, 120.0, 222.5; 5 B Prei (Pol) 95.0, 122.5, 217.5; 6 O Kerkelova (Bulg) 90.0, 122.5, 212.5; 7 M J Park (S Kor) 92.5, 115.0, 207.5; 8 L Foreman (US) 92.5, 110.0, 202.5; 9 M Tatsi (Gr) 80.0, 112.5, 192.5; 10 S Leathers (US) 82.5, 105.0, 187.5.

TODAY'S NUMBER

126,500

The record amount, in dollars, paid at auction yesterday for the ball that Babe Ruth hit for his first home run 75 years ago. The previous record was $93,500.

Carling's weird attempt at method acting

CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV

THE IDEA of John Inverdale as the poor man's Jeremy Paxman is slightly laughable, though a couple of weeks ago on *McCoist and MacAulay* (BBC1) he was asked how he managed to get away with asking such tough, uncompromising questions, at which point this observer spluttered at the screen. But he obviously took the notion on board, and he's hardened up his act for the new series of *On Side* (BBC1, Monday), though they're still delivered in a woolly-jumper kind of way.

A journalistic colleague, Ian Stafford, recently went three rounds with the boxer, Roy Jones, for the purposes of a book – the lunatic – but Inverdale went one better, risking the wrath of Jenny Pitman with a checklist of insults he chucked at her in the course of an otherwise genial interview. "Belligerent" and "obnoxious" were among the epithets he applied, without receiving one of her famous punches in the mouth.

One question was a double-edged classic: had being "bloody-minded" helped her in her struggle with cancer? "I prefer to call it determination," she demurred.

No doubt with his recent public pillorying in mind for being a serial family-wrecker, Will Carling, Inverdale's lead-off guest, seemed to be expecting a good kicking by way of retribution. He would clearly have preferred to be covered all over in butterfly kisses by the likes of Martin Bashir, much in the manner of his late alleged chum, Princess Diana, rather than subject himself even to a gentle buffeting from "Gestapo" Inverdale. The suspicion grew, though, that if he looked uncomfortable, it was a fine example of chat-show method acting.

Carling's discomfort, it soon became blindingly obvious, was a put-up job. Inverdale's first fastball promised much: "So hero to zero?" But he probably hadn't reckoned on drowning in a pool of crocodile tears. The Diana-Bashir love-in provided inspirational horizons: Carling had all the moves – the voice low almost beyond the range of human sensory capability, with a gruff, throaty undertow to suggest vulnerability and emotional scars. Walking out on his family was tough for him too, he said. And he'd been stitched up by the media (it's always the media's fault, *even for those whose own hands are* filthy with media moolah).

"I'm not arrogant, I'm not selfish," he said. "I'm shy. I don't work a room like a politician, I stand in the corner." So did former colleagues' comments sadden him? "Everything saddens me," he replied, his eyes downcast, his brow furrowed. Huh. As Denis Leary put it in his No Cure For Cancer show, "Life sucks. Get a helmet." The point about Carling's appearance on the programme was not that he has somehow to answer publicly for walking out on his family. That's his and their business. But he must have seen it as some kind of step towards rehabilitation in the public mind (and the public purse?), a little like Hugh Grant's post-fellatio interview on Jay Leno. And Carling played the victim to the end. As the audience applauded, he looked grimly down at the studio floor, resolute in his determination not to smile. He might have thought that perhaps there were a few "aahs" being aah-ed up and down the country. In truth, it just looked a bit weird.

The first of the returning *They Think It's All Over* (BBC1, Thursday) must have been recorded before the Carling interview was shown. If they had seen it they would have ripped him to shreds. They were back in all their laddish glory (with Alan Davies standing in for the resting Lee Hirst), only Franck Lebeouf, carrying himself exactly like a man who's recently addressed the Oxford Union, adrift amid the Men Behaving Badly lagerspeak, all the knobs-and-shagging jokes. (I do wish Lebeouf would remove the unnecessary and upsetting facial hair skulking beneath his lower lip, incidentally. It looks less like whiskers and more like a collection of small boils. If it is, in fact, a collection of small boils, my apologies and a recommendation that he consults a dermatologist.)

The coarseness on TTIAO was mostly funny, sometimes just grating. And, of course, there was a foreigner on so there was all that humorous mock-xenophobia to get in. Lebeouf took it in good heart, though at one point he did crack slightly. Rory McGrath had a strange joke going about the French not having words for certain objects, *such as the baguette*. "But we do have a word for 'stupid,'" he said, his eyes flashing. He had a nice reply for every outrageous slur, every remark about his accent, or his command of the language. "I don't care," he repeated, every time to applause. "I won the World Cup." And there really is no answer to that.

Dominic Cork, the England bowler, successfully appeals for the wicket of Queensland's Paul Jackson on the first day of the tour match at Cazaly's Oval in Cairns yesterday *Allsport*

Fielding flaw hinders England

CRICKET

BY DEREK PRINGLE in Cairns

Queensland 193-8
v England

IN CONDITIONS that initially helped the bowlers but rarely dipped below the sauna side of comfortable, England enjoyed a satisfying first day against Queensland in Cairns. With the batsman having been the saving grace in Adelaide, it was the bowlers' job to show that at least some, if not all, the lessons of playing in Australia had sunk in.

The pitch, slow and damp after four inches of rain had fallen in the preceding 48 hours, was a good deal closer to the playing strips found in England than the usual pitches Down Under, although the stifling wet heat was a new condition, and there was occasional movement off the seam.

Even so, the creditable comfortably outweighed the shoddy, though a missed chance to dismiss Ian Healy, when the batsman was on seven, illustrated that such misses remain a luxury that this particular bowling attack – which is more sound than spectacular – can ill-afford. As he so often does for Australia, Healy went on to make a nuggety half-century, before eventually holing out to Robert Croft in the deep.

Giving the ball some air, Croft took two further wickets, one a smart return catch off his own bowling. His success, if not conclusive proof of inclusion next week, will at least give those touting the seven batsmen, four seam-bowlers theory for the Test something to think about. Like all rumours, this one has snowballed to the point where everyone but the players have taken it as read.

If there is a serious consideration towards an all-seam attack at the Gabba next Friday, *Dominic Cork may not make* the final quartet. Although he was the unlucky bowler who had Healy dropped after he edged a slash to Alec Stewart, Cork's bowling lacked both spark and direction.

The main problem with Cork is *that* his round-arm action only consistently tests batsmen when the ball swings. So far, the Kookaburra balls have not done so, which has caused the bowler problems. As a rule, Cork likes to get in close to the stumps, but without outswing he has not been able to exploit the so-called channel of uncertainty, just outside the batsman's off-stump.

Instead, Cork's line ends up either too straight – most of the runs scored off him here have come on the on-side – or too wide of off-stump to trouble all but the most impatient hothead. The obvious remedy is for him to rediscover his swing, though he could change his *angle by bowling from wider on* the return crease.

England began this last competitive outing before the first Test by winning what looked an important toss. Opening the bowling, Darren Gough took 25 minutes to complete the first over of the day, in front of a 2,000-strong crowd with an average age of 12.

Striking the opening batsman Matthew Hayden a painful blow on the gloves with his second ball – it actually broke his middle finger – Gough then lost his footing on the damp crease as he delivered his fifth ball. Unhappy, Gough requested some sawdust. After a quick search, and despite the ground being just 10 miles from a major logging area, none could be found. At that point, with Hayden deciding to retire hurt, the umpires led the teams off until some sawdust was located.

If it took a few overs after the restart for Gough to forget his tumble, he was again the pick of the bowlers on display. Concentrating on a full length, he soon had a scalp, the left-handed Jimmy Maher edging a forward push to Croft at first slip.

Stuart Law, who will be back for another English season as Essex's overseas player, followed next, the victim of his own extravagance as he top-edged a pull-shot off Dean Headley. Soon after, Gough nipped in with his second wicket when he had Martin Love caught by John Crawley at short mid-wicket.

At that stage, Queensland were essentially 61 for 4, Hayden's broken finger having ruled him out for the remainder of the match. With a slow outfield, as well as a sluggish pitch to contend with, attempts to rectify matters were always going to be painstakingly slow. Andrew Symonds, a dashing player when at Gloucestershire, had ground himself to a *standstill when Alan Mullally*, howling from the City End, forced him to drag an attempted pull-shot on to his stumps.

In fact, apart from Healy, who batted with his usual insouciance, only Geoff Foley, a former opening batsman, played with any freedom. Cutting the faster bowlers cleanly, Foley, a tall left-hander, also lofted Croft for several fours and a six. Even so, these exertions were the exception rather than the rule and his half-century still took the best part of three hours.

Cazaly's Oval, primarily an Australian Rules venue, does not see much competitive cricket and what was on show rarely quickened the pulse. Yet England, for perhaps the first time on tour, stuck to their task and out-percentaged their opponents. With sweat leaking from every pore, it was not as easy as it sounded.

First day of four

QUEENSLAND – First Innings

M L Hayden ret hurt	0
J P Maher c Croft b Gough	3
M L Love c Crawley b Gough	29
S G Law c Ramprakash b Headley	10
A Symonds b Mullally	12
G I Foley not out	64
I A Healy*† c Ramprakash b Croft	57
A J Bichel c and b Croft	2
A C Dale b Croft	4
P W Jackson lbw Cork	0
M S Kasprowicz not out	0
Extras (lb-2 w-1 nb-9)	12
Total (for 8, 83 overs)	**193**

Fall of wickets: 1-9 2-36 3-61 4-69 5-159 6-180 7-184 8-185

Bowling: Gough 16-4-37-2 (nb-2); Cork 12-1-25-1; Headley 15-7-33-1 (nb-2); Mullally 17-3-40-1 (w-1 nb-5); Croft 22-5-56-3; Ramprakash 1-1-0-0.

Umpires: A J McQuillan and S J Tausel

■ Shane Warne's long-awaited comeback to first-class cricket was delayed yesterday because of rain. The Australian leg-spinner, who had surgery on his shoulder in May, was due to return for Victoria in their Sheffield Shield match against Western Australia at the WACA in Perth, but the opening day's play of the four-day match was abandoned without a ball being bowled because of heavy showers.

Barlow targets S Africa batsmen

BY TELFORD VICE in Durban

SOUTH AFRICA plan to correct the impression that they are primarily one-day specialists in their historic first series against West Indies.

"The bottom line in Test cricket is getting enough runs and taking 20 wickets, and at the moment we are simply not getting enough runs," said South Africa's convenor of selectors, Peter Pollock. Toward that end, a group of South African batsmen, including those likely to feature in the team selected for the first of five Test matches, in Johannesburg from 26 November, are spending two days in Bloemfontein in the experienced hands of Eddie Barlow.

Barlow played 30 Tests for South Africa in the 1960s as an all-rounder who opened the batting, and he is now one of the most respected coaches in the country. Since the 1996 World Cup there has been no better limited overs team in the world than South Africa, but losing the Test series in England this year was a blow for the captain, Hansie Cronje, and the coach, Bob Woolmer.

Similarly, South Africa's failure to take a series off Australia since their readmission to world cricket in 1991 is a source of national discomfort. However, Pollock is confident that the teams he selects for the series against the West Indians can succeed without departing from the accepted South African way of cricket.

"It's all about applying fully what the world may regard as limited resources," he said.

Superb fitness, committed fielding and disciplined bowling are the familiar aspects of *South Africa's play*.

Sorting out the batting will entail, in part, finding an opening partner for Gary Kirsten, although Adam Bacher seems to have reclaimed his place with a century and two half-centuries in the first two rounds of the domestic first-class competition, and helping Kirsten over a finger injury and a form trough. Jacques Kallis, Daryll Cullinan and Cronje all played key roles in South Africa winning a limited overs tournament in Bangladesh earlier this month, and their continued good form in South Africa's top and middle order will be crucial.

Influencing Pollock, Cronje and Woolmer will be a nation which demands victory, regardless of the opposition.

As Pollock put it: "The guys know they're picked to win, and the public wants nothing less."

Nature has a way of dealing with people who lack respect

ANNALISA BARBIERI

ON FISHING

HAD THE river not separated us, I might just have skinned a man. There he was, on a gravel beach, dragging a netted fish out of the water because he was too lazy to walk the two feet to the water's edge and deal with the fish there. Then he chatted a bit to his friend while the fish flapped about. Surely, I thought, he's going to kill this poor fin-scraped, half dead fish? But no. Eventually, with a dry hand, he picked up the fish, unhooked him and threw him back in.

Fishing is a sport but all sport should be fair. Fish really can be hooked and played in with the minimum amount of stress caused to them. First, you should always play fish in firmly. This is to avoid exhausting them so much that as soon as you release them they go belly up. But not so firmly that the fish will break you and spend the rest of his life with a hook and a length of nylon hanging out of his mouth. Sadly, this does happen, even with the best intentions. A fish should be netted when he starts to turn, too soon and he will thrash about too much and hurt himself. Too late and he will be knackered, perhaps beyond redemption.

If you don't intend to keep the fish then whenever possible the fish should not leave the water (nor be netted) to be unhooked and released. The easiest way to do this is to run your hand down the leader, to the hook and then upturn the hook so that fish can shake itself free. That way you don't even need to touch him, save for perhaps the slightest brush. But, if even that is too much, or you are nervous of being able to get the hook out, there are special bits of equipment on the market (such as the Ketchum Release) that help you get a hook out. These slide down the line and push the hook out with supposed ease.

But of course, there are times when one has to handle a fish and then you absolutely must wet and cool your hand first so dip it into the water.

Touching a fish with a dry hand is one of the cruellest things you can do because they have a protective slime that covers their body and a hot, dry hand rips slime which in turn allows bacteria and fungi in. Not nice. If the hook is deeply lodged, or difficult to retrieve, then use forceps, which should be a basic part of any fisherman's kit.

Fish that are to be returned but have been taken out of the water may need to be nursed as you put them back in. And the longer they have been out of the water, the longer you'll need to nurse them. To do this you support the fish in the water by putting a hand under its belly. Then you slowly move him back and forth, until he gets his wind back; you'll see his little gills pumping away and when he's ready, he'll swim off. One beginner I once saw, having netted the fish, jammed his finger in the gill to give him leverage whilst he tried to get the hook out (yes I did step in). That fish took ten minutes of nursing to be OK again.

If you do intend to keep your fish then please kill him as soon as possible with a swift blow to the head. Unhook him *after* he's dead. Do make sure he is properly dead before you lay him out in splendour on the bank, you can tell because his pupils will be in the centre of the eye, a live fish's pupils will point downwards.

But nature has a funny way of dealing with people that show little respect. On a recent trip salmon fishing, I had the great misfortune of being with a group of men who should not have been allowed near any fish, let alone the mighty (and endangered) salmon. On the whole, I have found most fishermen to be very respectful of the fish and the laws of the river. They will release a hen fish to carry on upstream and spawn and they know that all kelt fish (salmon that have spawned and distinguishable by their red colouring) must be returned to allow them to continue their journey back to sea.

But back to this fishing trip. "I don't care if it's a hen fish or what colour it is, if it's my first salmon, I'm bashing it on the head," was a common refrain. On the first day the river yielded none of her fish and the heavens rained down on us. That night, the river rose six feet, flooding the banks so that no one could get near her – literally throwing us off the river. Nature had intervened and I could not help but smile. Perhaps now, the salmon could get safely home.

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

THE SWEEPER

BY CLIVE WHITE AND NICK HARRIS

J-League target for Villa's Gregory

JUST WHEN we were all thinking that John Gregory was deliberately striking a blow for England during these pro-foreigner days of the Premiership by picking a team made up exclusively of Englishmen, another reason for the Aston Villa manager's selection policy has revealed itself – he's a uniformity freak.

The sense of harmony that runs through John Gregory's team also runs through his family – everyone in it has the same initials. His dad, Jack Gregory, a former West Ham and Scunthorpe player, started it when he married his mother, Jean. His sisters are called Jeanette and Janice. And John Gregory's own children? Joe, Jason and the twins Jenny and Jimmy.

As a boy John Charles Gregory – he was named after the Welsh legend – supported Tottenham Hotspur where it goes without saying that his hero was Jimmy Greaves. Oh yes, and his first job in management – an unfortunate experience at Portsmouth – was under the chairmanship of the late Jim Gregory.

WHILE CHELSEA'S preference for exotic foreign delights is well known, chairman Ken Bates obviously holds rare, beautiful and home grown specimens in lower regard. Why else would he want to concrete over the habitat of the *Dactylorchis Fuchsii*, (left) which, despite its English name – Common Spotted Orchid – is actually rather rare?

Part of Bates' development plans for Chelsea include building a footway from Chelsea Village to West Brompton tube station, along a route designated as being of high importance for wildlife in Hammersmith and Fulham.

According the London Wildlife Trust, should the path be built, "the loss of this site will seriously damage the nature conservation value of this part of London, an area that is already impoverished for wildlife."

Spokesman Pete Guest, who said the Trust intend to oppose planning permission for the path, added: "We find it astonishing that the only significant natural habitat in the locality is regarded with such disdain by Chelsea Football Club."

Now is perhaps not the time to point out that Chelsea Football Club – with their astronomical ticket pricing policy alone – have long shown a similar disdain for their own fans, so there is little hope of them backing down unless forced.

"We're not talking about just one plant but a whole wildlife habitat," said Guest, explaining why it is not possibly simply to move the group of endangered species to another home.

"The question is where can you transfer it to? There's nowhere to put it and it would be lost."

Perhaps someone should explain to Bates that although varieties such as *Laudrupus Homesickus* can be imported, uprooted and shipped out again within months, the same is not so true of other fragile organisms.

SONG SHEET

Ode to Crystal Palace's tasty Italian dish

"Just one Lombardo,
Give him to me,
The greatest player
In it-a-ly.
[illegible]
[illegible] don't care,
[illegible]e've got Lombardo
[illegible]m I-ta-ly"

Tune: O sole mio

NOW WE know where Lee Hughes, the country's leading goal-scorer, gets his cheek from in front of goal. It comes from a long line of die-hard Baggies fans, not the least of which is his grandfather Albert, who, according to the *Birmingham Evening Mail* created something of a stir himself once on The Hawthorns pitch. Ginger-haired, just like his grandson, Albert lost half a leg when he stepped on a land mine during the Second World War while fighting with the Black Watch in Italy. The story goes that shortly after the war, while watching an international between England and Wales at the Hawthorns, he became so appalled with the efforts of the home team, which included Stanley Matthews, that at half-time he clambered over the terracing, removed his wooden leg and planted it in the pitch, as if to say: "Play with this one, you couldn't do any worse with it."

PREVIOUS HISTORY of physical confrontations involving the referee Paul Alcock continue to surface. Carrying on from the Paolo Di Canio, Frank Sinclair and Wayne Biggins experiences is one involving Stewart Houston, Arsenal's former assistant manager. In a match at Highbury during Houston's time there, Paul Alcock again found himself on the receiving end even though he was only the fourth official. Graham Poll was the referee and had controversially denied Arsenal a penalty when at the game's conclusion Alcock returned to the officials' dressing-room complaining that he had been assaulted by Houston, whom, apparently, had said he had "kneed me up the arse." Houston, who denied the assault, was nevertheless forced to write a letter of apology over the incident to the Football Association.

THE SIGHT of the referee waiting for the OK from the man from Sky before he can blow the whistle for the start of a televised game is, sadly, an all too familiar sight at football grounds nowadays. But in the light of the satellite company's proposed takeover of Manchester United it struck one as particularly incongruous last Tuesday when the referee had to wait for permission, as usual, to start Liverpool's televised Worthington Cup tie against Tottenham Hotspur. So that's what it has come down to – Manchester United telling Liverpool when they can kick off a match at Anfield.

MANCHESTER CITY fans have been enjoying a little humour at the expense of their former misfit-now-reject Lee Bradbury following his transfer to Crystal Palace. The joke goes something like this: Why is Lee Bradbury the only player in English football with two silent R's in his surname? Answer: Because he was bought for £3.5m from Portsmouth and sold for £1.5m. Bad buy. Geddit?

AS YOU WERE

KENNETH MATHIESON DALGLISH started his professional career as a 16-year-old in 1967, moving to Liverpool in 1977. From the late Seventies (main picture) onwards, the young Scot was an integral part of the Reds side that dominated English football. Management came and went, and he has now (inset) broadened his horizons to ownership, as a co-bid for Celtic this week showed.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

THE SWEEPER is not a bad loser. Roberto Carlos Sosa, Andy Booth, and the entire Liverpool defence: bastards the lot of you. But enough of last week's tragedies. Roma look the banker bet of the season to beat the injury-plagued Juventus at the Olympic Stadium tomorrow. The superb Marco Delvecchio can score first in what could be a 2-1 win.

SWEEPER'S GILT-EDGED SECURITIES

SATURDAY LIBERO WAGERS
(10 x 50p trebles with Stanley): Charlton to draw with Middlesbrough (9-4); Liverpool to draw with Leeds (12-5); Manchester United to beat Blackburn (2-5); Newcastle to beat Sheffield Wednesday (8-13); West Ham to draw with Leicester (12-5).
Arsenal v Tottenham
Score: 1-1 & 2-2 (50p at 11-2, generally & 50p at 14-1, generally).
Newcastle v Sheffield Wednesday
First goal: Alan Shearer (£1 at 9-2, William Hill).

SUNDAY SKY MATCH
Coventry v Everton
Score: 1-1 (£1 at 11-2, generally).
First goal: Duncan Ferguson (£1 at 13-2, William Hill).

SUNDAY C4 ITALIAN JOB
Roma v Juventus
Result: Roma to win (£5 at 8-5, Stanley).
Score: 2-1 (£1 at 9-1 William Hill & Stanley).
First goal: Marco Delvecchio (£1 at 6-1, William Hill).

MONDAY SKY MATCH
Nottingham Forest v Derby
Score: 1-1 (£1 at 11-2 generally).
First goal: Pierre Van Hooijdonk (£1 at 11-2 Stanley).

ORIGINAL BANK: £100.
CURRENT KITTY: £101.68!
TODAY'S BETS: £19.62 (including £1.62 tax paid on).

ON THE BOARD

Name: Theo Paphitis.
Position: Chairman, Millwall Football Club.
Form: Knickers, among other things. Paphitis has a track record in turning round struggling companies including Rymans, the stationary chain, and La Senza and Contessa, the lingerie firms.
Big ideas: Has presided over a shake-up at the New Den that has included the sponsorship deal with LIVE TV that saw his players run out with "The Weather In Norwegian" across their chests. Some other prudent financial management and cost-cutting has streamlined the company into a more efficient business but other problems remain, notably the spectre of hooliganism. After the riot following the match with Manchester City earlier in the season, Paphitis commented: "If a handful of youngsters going on the pitch intimidate Joe Royle's players, they should go back to kindergarten." Not perhaps, the most tactful of statements after a pitch invasion, and illustrative perhaps of how much work there is still to do. Whether Paphitis will quit while ahead or stick to his task remains to be seen.

MY TEAM

ALISON KING
LIVERPOOL

Actress in Sky's *Dream Team*, otherwise known as the chairman's wife, Lynda Block "My older brother supported Liverpool as I grew up. In those days I was a girlie girl who didn't understand football but I got my boyfriend to explain it all to me. I went to the Arsenal game earlier this season and I met Shaggy and some of the other players and was well star-struck. I've met actors and famous people like that but I've never been start struck like that meeting Macca, and the kid Owen and David James. No one seems to like James but I do. My favourite has to be McManaman and the work he does with his little legs."

IN T'NET

Found on the Web: A variety of reasons why Manchester United fans do not want their club to be sold to BSkyB.
The web site of the Independent Manchester United Supporters' Association carries not only news articles and updates on the campaign to stop the takeover, but a library of material citing reasons it feels make Rupert Murdoch an inappropriate patron for their club. Not to be outdone in the commercial opportunity stakes by the Digger, IMUSA also give you the chance to buy T-shirts in a variety of sizes and colours.
http://www.imusa.org/library/lobby.htm

SEEN BUT NOT BOUGHT

HAND-PAINTED personalised football Gnomes. Widely advertised in football magazines and small ads columns, the Gnomes can be bought with an extraordinary range of hair colours and with myriad facial hair arrangements, not to mention the team colours of any side in the world at all. Hand cast from cement, the Gnomes are 10.5in tall and are tastefully mounted on a felt base. At just £29.99 each, who could possibly hesitate before phoning and ordering? A sane person, perhaps?

THEY'RE NOT ALL DENNIS BERGKAMP

Unsung foreign legionnaires No 14

GEORGE KULCSAR: The Australian midfielder joined QPR from Bradford in March last year on a three year contract in a deal that will be worth up to £250,000 depending on appearances. The 6ft 2in 31-year-old was born in Budapest, Hungary, but his family emigrated to Australia when he was six. Kulcsar played junior and semi-professional football in the Antipodes for several years before making a big move in 1992 to Antwerp in Belgium, where he remained until moving to Yorkshire in 1997. "Rangers have a squad full of quality players and hopefully it is just a case of finding the right blend," he said somewhat optimistically upon his arrival in West London. Has been capped on several occasions by his country, another side full of quality players.

Burchill can fire Celtic

SCOTTISH PREVIEW

CELTIC GO into the match with St Johnstone today at McDiarmid Park with events off the pitch still dominating their timetable.

Supporters believe that a takeover consortium, which includes their former player Kenny Dalglish and the Simple Minds singer Jim Kerr, would amount to a dream team – and are now looking for the side to shape up.

Following the departure of Jock Brown as general manager last Saturday, Celtic chalked up a 6-1 victory over Dundee. Jozef Venglos's side should now record successive victories with the Saints short on confidence after the 7-0 demolition by Rangers last week.

Mark Burchill will probably be in the line-up after marking his first start with two goals.

The 18-year-old striker's agent, Blair Morgan, is currently in talks with the finance director, Eric Riley, and at the moment all the signs point to the player remaining at Parkhead.

Andy McCondichie will stay in goal as Jonathan Gould and Stewart Kerr are both injured.

Celtic are set to ease their goalkeeping crisis by snapping up Blackpool's Steve Banks. They have already made an approach for the 26-year-old and are poised to make a £500,000 bid.

Russell Anderson is determined to burst Rangers' bubble at Ibrox and prove that Aberdeen are on the mend after the club ended a dismal run of 12 games without a win by defeating Dunfermline 2-1 last weekend. That victory lifted their spirits and the Scotland Under-21 defender Anderson hopes they can carry on the good work against the league leaders. He said: "You always get a difficult match at Ibrox, but we can now approach it with confidence and hopefully come away with a good result."

The unsettled Craig Hignett is expected to retain his place in midfield for Aberdeen. It has been reported that the club would be willing to give him four days off a week so he can visit his children in Warrington.

Hearts, who returned to winning ways at the weekend, travel to Motherwell while Dundee entertain Kilmarnock in the day's other games.

Dunfermline face Dundee United on Sunday, anxious to escape the foot of the table after only one Premier League victory this season.

Injury-hit Juve's tough Roma trip

ITALIAN PREVIEW

BY IAN DAVIES

ROMA, WHO boast a 100 per cent record so far this season, entertain Juventus in *Serie A* at the Olympic Stadium tomorrow, extended highlights of which will be screened on Channel 4 tomorrow afternoon.

Roma's four home wins out of four include an amazing, nine-man, 2-1 victory over Fiorentina, the Italian league leaders, and an emphatic 4-0 victory over Udinese, who snatched a late equaliser to deprive Juventus of all three points in Udine last week. The excellent Marco Delvecchio, whose goal knocked Leeds out of the Uefa Cup, and Francesco Totti will lead the line for Roma.

Juventus are in poor shape. They will also be without the striker Alessandro Del Piero, out with knee ligament damage, the playmaker Zinedine Zidane, who limped off after 20 minutes on Wednesday in Juventus' Italian Cup draw at Venezia, the midfielder Didier Deschamps and Nicola Amoruso. Juve may be forced to repeat Wednesday's experiment of using the defenders Ciro Ferrara and Igor Tudor in attack. They will also be without Marcello Lippi, their coach, who is banned from the touchline for yelling at the referee at the end of last Sunday's game.

Other games tomorrow: Empoli v Cagliari, Internazionale v Sampdoria, Parma v Udinese, Piacenza v Fiorentina, Salernitana v Perugia, Venezia v Lazio, Vicenza v Bologna. Tomorrow night: Bari v Milan.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

		Pl	Pts	GD	Home W	Home D	Home L	Home F	Home A	Away W	Away D	Away L	Away F	Away A	5-game form (Most recent on right)	Upcoming matches
1	Aston Villa	11	25	+9	5	1	0	11	4	2	3	0	3	1	WWDDW	Today: Southampton (H); 21: New Liverpool (A); 28: New Nottm Forest (H); 5 Dec: High Bury (A)
2	Arsenal	12	23	+9	4	2	0	10	2	2	3	1	4	3	WDWWW	Today: Tottenham (H); 21: New Middlesbro (A); 28: New Middlesbro (H); 5 Dec: Derby (A)
3	Man Utd	11	22	+14	4	2	0	15	4	2	2	1	8	5	WWDWD	Today: Blackburn (H); 21: New Sheff Wed (A); 28: New Leeds (H); 5 Dec: Aston Villa (A)
4	Middlesbrough	12	18	+5	2	4	0	10	5	2	2	2	10	10	WWDDD	Today: Charlton (A); 21: New Coventry (H); 28: New Arsenal (A); 6 Dec: Newcastle (H)
5	Chelsea	10	17	+4	3	2	0	7	3	1	3	1	7	7	WDWDD	Today: Wimbledon (A); 21: New Aston Villa (H); 28: New Sheff Wed (H); 5 Dec: Everton (A)
6	Leeds	12	17	+4	3	2	1	6	2	0	6	0	7	7	LDDDW	Today: Liverpool (A); 21: New Charlton (H); 28: New Man Utd (A); 5 Dec: West Ham (H)
7	Derby	12	17	+2	2	3	1	6	4	2	2	2	6	6	LLDDW	Monday: Nottm Forest (H); 21: New Sheff Wed (A); 28: Bar Southampton (H); 5 Dec: Aston Villa (H)
8	Leicester	12	17	+1	3	2	1	7	4	1	3	2	4	6	WWDWD	Today: West Ham (A); 21: New Chelsea (H); 28: New Coventry (A); 5 Dec: Southampton (H)
9	West Ham	12	17	0	2	3	1	7	6	2	2	2	7	7	LDLWD	Today: Leicester (H); 23: New Derby (A); 28: New Tottenham (H); 5 Dec: Leeds (A)
10	Wimbledon	12	17	-2	2	3	1	10	8	2	2	2	8	11	LLDDW	Today: Chelsea (A); 21: New Arsenal (H); 28: New Newcastle (A); 5 Dec: Coventry (H)
11	Liverpool	12	16	+5	2	3	1	12	7	2	1	3	7	7	DDWLL	Today: Leeds (H); 21: New Aston Villa (A); 28: New Blackburn (H); 5 Dec: Leicester (A)
12	Charlton	12	15	+3	2	2	1	11	5	1	4	2	8	11	WLWDD	Today: Middlesbrough (H); 21: New Leeds (A); 28: New Everton (H); 5 Dec: Blackburn (A)
13	Newcastle	12	15	-1	3	1	2	9	8	1	2	3	6	8	LWLLD	Today: Sheff Wed (A); 21: New Everton (H); 28: New Middlesbro (A); 6 Dec: Middlesbro (H)
14	Tottenham	12	15	-5	2	2	2	9	12	2	1	3	7	9	WLWDL	Today: Arsenal (A); 21: New Nottm Forest (H); 28: New West Ham (A); 5 Dec: Liverpool (H)
15	Everton	12	12	-4	0	4	2	1	5	2	2	2	6	6	WDDLL	Today: Coventry (H); 23: New Newcastle (H); 28: New Sheff Wed (A); 5 Dec: Chelsea (H)
16	Sheff Wed	12	11	-3	2	2	2	4	2	1	0	5	5	10	WLDDL	Today: Newcastle (H); 21: New Man Utd (A); 28: New Chelsea (A); 7 Dec: Nottm Forest (H)
17	Coventry	12	11	-9	2	1	3	5	9	1	1	4	4	9	LWLLW	Today: Everton (H); 21: New Wimbledon (A); 28: New Leicester (H); 5 Dec: Newcastle (A)
18	Blackburn	12	9	-5	2	1	3	9	8	0	2	4	3	9	WLLDL	Today: Man Utd (A); 21: New Southampton (H); 28: New Liverpool (A); 5 Dec: Charlton (H)
19	Nottm Forest	12	8	-10	1	2	3	2	9	1	1	4	6	13	LDLDLD	Monday: Derby (A); 21: New Tottenham (H); 28: New Aston Villa (H); 7 Dec: Sheff Wed (A)
20	Southampton	12	7	-17	1	2	3	8	12	0	2	4	1	14	LDWDD	Today: Aston Villa (A); 21: New Bar Forest (A); 28: New Derby (H); 5 Dec: Leicester (A)

FA Cup first round: Rymans League amateurs prepare to reap rewards of playing at Deepdale

Ford on drive to deflate Preston

BY ADAM SZRETER

IF DENNIS ELLIOTT, the manager of Ford United, was not already aware of the magnitude of his team's achievement in reaching the first round of the FA Cup, he became so at around five o'clock on Tuesday evening. "We went up to Preston for their game against Millwall and checked on the hotel where we're staying on Friday night," he said, "making sure they've got no mini-bars and the players can't get alcohol with room service, that sort of thing.

"Preston invited us down to the ground before the match and showed us around. As soon as I walked on to the pitch, the whole stadium just lit up. You see the two pictures of Bill Shankly and Tom Finney on the seats and, er... I'm not a nervous person normally, I'm very laid back, but my knees started to wobble a bit."

Some of the gloss might have been knocked off the oldest Cup competition in the world in recent seasons, but nowhere will the reason for its enduring appeal be more apparent than at Deepdale today. Preston North End, winners in 1889 and 1938, against a team who just three years ago were at the very bottom of the non-League pyramid and in danger of dropping out of the Essex Senior League.

Ford have taken a step up into the Rymans League since then but, put in perspective, today's game is between a side from the third tier of English football and one from the ninth. Preston's players are full-time professionals, Ford's players are amateurs: their captain, Reg Gardner, is a postman; their chairman, Jim Chapman, is also their goalkeeper.

Although they still bear the name, and still play at the Ford Sports and Social Club ground near the car plant in Dagenham, it has been years since the club could offer jobs with the motor company as an inducement to prospective players. Their most famous recruit, Les Allen – father of Clive and later a member of Queen's Park Rangers' 1967 League Cup-winning side – played in the team then known as Brigg Sports that lost 2-1 to Bishop Auckland in front of 54,000 at St James' Park in the semi-finals of the 1954 Amateur Cup.

Nowadays, despite an £80,000 handout from Ford for ground improvements, in order to stave off closure the club relies on the goodwill of sponsors that include Sky, thanks to the television company's own sponsorship deal for Monday night football with Ford.

Only one of the current team is a Ford worker (Eddie Carrick, sadly suspended along with Jimmy Prue for today's game), and even Chapman's appointment has broken with the tradition of the chairman coming from within the ranks of the Ford payroll, a position held until recently by John Rowe who first joined the club as a player in 1959.

Rowe, along with another longtime servant of the club, George Adams, is chief executive now while Chapman, a 30-year-old senior trader for stockbrokers Merrill Lynch, keeps goal and keeps an eye on the cash flow. "Three years ago we had a good season but the money ran out with two or three months to go," he said, explaining how he has become the first goalkeeper-chairman in the competition's history.

"I said to Dennis, instead of the season falling apart and everyone going their separate ways I didn't mind sticking a few quid in till the end of the season. The players appreciated it and it didn't cost me an awful lot – to me it was a bobby and I just wanted to keep it going.

"I stuck another few quid up at the start of the next season, our first in the Rymans League, and then Dennis said he thought the way the club was run should change and asked if I would back him up. I said 'of course', and he rang me two or three days later and said, 'You're chairman'.

"All the people who were there before are still there and work really hard for the club, it's just that they're not in a personal position to put any money into it. I leave the chatting-to-the-chairman bit to George and John – I'd rather go and have a drink with the players after a game. But I'm concerned with finding ways for me not to have to dip my hand in my pocket, coming up with ideas and trying to make sure the club, eventually, is self-sufficient.

"People like Sky are not going to sponsor us forever and I can put in as much money as I like but that's not curing the problem. The money that comes in from this Cup run, we could easily smash it up and say to the players, 'Well done, there's a grand', but we've had a meeting and decided that we really do want to put it back into Ford United."

As far as the game itself is concerned, Chapman casts off the suit and tie and dons his goalkeeping gloves: "We might be nervous, but we're not under any pressure," he said. "Playing Lowestoft in the last round was massive pressure because you're playing a team of similar ability for the reward of a big day out. And we did it, we handled the pressure really well. Preston might whack us six or seven-nil, but no one expects us to get a result.

"It's a big day for us and we feel privileged to go there – these opportunities are once in a lifetime for some people – but when it comes to five to three I'll just be trying to get the nerves out of my system. The respect will always be there but, when it comes to the 90 minutes, our players won't give Preston any more respect than if we were playing Clapton, or Dagenham and Redbridge. We want to get a result." And with ambition like that, who needs money?

Jimmy Chapman, Ford United's goalkeeper and chairman, is well qualified to handle the club's finances as a City stockbroker *Peter Jay*

FORD UNITED'S WEMBLEY DREAMERS

Jim Chapman: 30, goalkeeper, stockbroker, club chairman.
Terry Beck: 32, sweeper or centre-half, fire protection officer.
Ben Willis: 22, central defender, works for Barking Council.
Lee "Arthur" Fowler: 24, right-back, salesman (Conference experience with Dagenham).
Jay Devereux: 25, left-back, works for Barking Council (Conference experience with Dagenham).
Reg Gardner: 32, midfield strongman, captain, postman.
Mark Lord: 30, midfield playmaker, carpenter.
Steve Munday: 31, midfield maestro, window fitter.
"Dangerous" Dave Riley: 25, midfield dynamo, maintenance man.
Geoff Wood: 34, striker (99 goals in past two seasons), civil servant.
Lee "Poo" Parish: 28, striker, "does *something mucky with concrete*",

Ferguson will wait to find his man

THE FORMER Manchester United goalkeeper Alex Stepney believes Alex Ferguson must now dig deep into the Old Trafford coffers to replace Peter Schmeichel, after the Dane announced yesterday that he would be leaving United at the end of this season after eight glittering years at the club.

Stepney, who won the European Cup with United in 1968, has warned that the club do not appear to have a ready-made replacement. "Raimond van der Gouw is now 35 and I can't really see anybody coming through at the moment ready to go straight into the side," Stepney said. "So it looks as though Alex Ferguson will have to go out and buy."

Stepney is now goalkeeping coach at United's neighbours City, but he still believes Schmeichel can help the team to repeat his feats of 30 years ago. "He has brought a lot of success to United and, at the end of the day, his ambition is to win the Champions' League. I just hope it happens for him," Stepney said. "It is the only competition he hasn't won with the club and it would be a great goodbye present for the United fans."

However Stepney is still reeling from the shock of Schmeichel's announcement which took the whole football world by surprise. Schmeichel has struggled with a persistent back injury throughout his Old Trafford career and has been known to have the occasional rush of blood – as he did most recently against Bayern Munich in the Champions' League game which cost United all three points in Germany – but Stepney insists that the Dane's ability behind the United defence will always ensure legendary status and a warm welcome whenever he returns to Old Trafford.

"It is a bit of a shock but it is one of those things," Stepney said. "He has done unbelievably well with the club and I am sure all Manchester United supporters will wish him well wherever he goes from now on."

Ferguson has until the start of next season to find a replacement for the Danish international goalkeeper, who will quit United in May, and will not be rushed in his search to find a successor.

"We've got until next August to sign someone so we have got time on our side," said Ferguson. "We are looking at things and we will be sending people abroad and assessing a lot of things."

United have been strongly linked with Aston Villa's Mark Bosnich, who started his career at Old Trafford and made three league appearances before he left because of work permit problems. The Australian looks certain to move from Villa Park at the end of the season, but Roma are also known to be interested. Schmeichel has suggested the French international Fabien Barthez as a possible successor.

Argyle aware of Allner's giant-killing stock

BY RUPERT METCALF

ONLY ONCE since they joined the new Third Division of the Football League have Plymouth Argyle been knocked out of the FA Cup by a non-League club. Twenty years ago the Devon side, under the flamboyant managership of Malcolm Allison, went down 2-0 after a woeful display at Worcester City.

Today, in one of many first-round ties which could produce an upset, Argyle entertain another Worcestershire side, Kidderminster Harriers – whose manager, Graham Allner, wore the No 11 shirt in that Worcester team which humbled Allison's men.

Before embarking on his meritorious managerial career, Allner was a crafty forward with Stafford Rangers, Alvechurch and Worcester. "I remember the pre-match publicity prior to that Plymouth tie," he said this week. "Big Mal was causing a bit of a stir and our manager, Nobby Clark, who was a real character in his own right, responded by making all sorts of boasts about what we would do to his side.

"It wound them up, and we won it well. We had a good side, but I think I got taken off that day, so I can't have had that good a game!"

Allner's counterpart at Plymouth, Kevin Hodges, had made the first of a club-record 530 league appearances for Argyle a couple of months before that Worcester tie. Although he did not play at St George's Lane, he remembers the aftermath of the defeat. "Everybody was so deflated," he said, "but that's what makes the Cup so special. Anyone can turn their dreams into reality."

Allner has enjoyed many more cup celebrations since that day. In charge at Kidderminster since 1983, his team won the FA Trophy at Wembley four years later and they had a famous FA Cup run five seasons ago. A 2-1 win at Birmingham City in the third round was followed by a 1-0 home victory over Preston and a brave 1-0 defeat to West Ham in the fifth round.

Harriers won the Conference that season, but were denied a place in the Football League because they had too few seats. That has been rectified but, apart from second place in the league in 1997, the last few years have been relatively barren.

"That '94 side was at its peak," Allner said. "The current team has the potential to compare but they blow hot and cold. We have a lot of new players. We're an inconsistent side – but so are Plymouth and, if they have an off-day, we have a chance."

Allner's old club, Worcester City, are at home to another Devon outfit, Torquay United. City are hoping that their opponents are superstitious about the "20-year factor". In 1978 Plymouth lost at St George's Lane – and in 1958-59 Liverpool, then in the Second Division, suffered the same fate in a third-round Cup tie.

Many Nationwide League clubs were surprised to discover that the draw is no longer regionalised. Colchester United, who make the long trek to Northumberland to tackle the champions of the Northern League, Bedlington Terriers, are one of several teams on unfamiliar territory.

Basingstoke Town of the Ryman League, who knocked out John Gregory's Wycombe Wanderers last season, are at home to another Second Division side, Bournemouth. The tie inflicts a conflict of loyalties upon Basingstoke's chaplain, Reverend Ken Batt, a Bournemouth fan. "If he can conjure up a little help from above, it will be greatly appreciated," David Knight, the Hampshire club's chairman, said.

Garry Birtles tasted the big time with Nottingham Forest and Manchester United. Now he is manager of Gresley Rovers, who travel to Walsall. Slough Town's player-manager, Graham Roberts, plays what he insists is his last FA Cup tie at Macclesfield Town.

Tomorrow, the Boreham Wood striker Kerry Dixon, once of Chelsea, will have what may be a brief return to the limelight in a televised tie against Luton Town, another of his many former clubs, at Meadow Park.

Also tomorrow, the former Barnsley striker Ronnie Glavin will be back at Oakwell as manager of Emley, who lost to West Ham in the third round last season and have borrowed the First Division club's stadium for their tie against Rotherham United.

WEEKEND FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

TODAY

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Birmingham Bullets v Derby Storm (7.0); Greater London Leopards v Chester Jets (7.0) (*at Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre*); Leicester Riders v London Towers (7.30); Thames Valley Tigers v Milton Keynes Lions (8.0); Worthing Bears v Edinburgh Rocks (8.0).

BOXING

PROFESSIONAL PROMOTION (Acerbi WBO Inter-Continental lightweight title (Grundy Park Leisure Centre, Cheshunt): K Lueshing v N Thurbin.

CRICKET

TOUR MATCH (Cairns, second day of four): Queensland v England.

FOOTBALL

3.0 unless stated

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP
1 Arsenal v Tottenham
2 Charlton v Middlesbrough
3 Chelsea v Wimbledon
4 Liverpool v Leeds
5 Manchester Utd v Blackburn
6 Newcastle v Sheffield Wednesday
7 Southampton v Aston Villa
8 West Ham v Leicester

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
9 Barnsley v Ipswich
10 Birmingham v Oxford Utd
11 Bolton v Tranmere
12 Bradford v Swindon
13 Crewe v QPR
14 Crystal Palace v Bristol City
15 Grimsby v Portsmouth
16 Norwich v Wolves
17 Port Vale v Sunderland
18 Sheffield Utd v Bury
19 Stockport v Watford
20 West Bromwich v Huddersfield

AXA FA CUP FIRST ROUND
– Basingstoke v Bournemouth
– Bedlington v Colchester
– Brentford v Camberley
– Bristol Rovers v Welling
21 Cardiff v Chester
– Cheltenham v Lincoln City
22 Darlington v Burnley ....*Postponed
23 Dulwich Hamlet v Southport
24 Enfield v York
25 Hartlepool v Carlisle
26 Hednesford v Barnet
– Kingstonian v Button Albion
27 Leyton Orient v Brighton
28 Macclesfield v Slough
– Mansfield v Hayes
– Northampton v Lancaster
29 Oldham v Gillingham
30 Plymouth v Kidderminster
– Preston v Ford Utd
– Reading v Stoke
31 Runcorn v Stevenage
– Rushden v Shrewsbury
– Salisbury v Hull
32 Scarborough v Rochdale
33 Southend v Doncaster
34 Swansea v Millwall ....*Postponed
35 Tamworth v Exeter
36 Telford v Cambridge Utd
– Walsall v Gresley Rovers
37 Wigan v Blackpool
– Woking v Scunthorpe
– Worcester v Torquay
38 Wrexham v Peterborough
39 Wycombe v Chesterfield
– Yeovil v West Auckland

** Swansea City v Millwall played yesterday; Darlington v Burnley playing Tuesday or Middlesbrough.*

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
40 Dundee v Kilmarnock
41 Motherwell v Hearts
42 Rangers v Aberdeen
43 St Johnstone v Celtic

SCOTTISH LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
44 Ayr v Clydebank
45 Falkirk v Raith
46 Morton v Airdrie
47 Hamilton v Stranraer
48 Hibernian v St Mirren

SECOND DIVISION
49 Arbroath v Livingston
– Clyde v Alloa
– East Fife v Forfar
– Queen of the South v Inverness CT
– Stirling v Partick Thistle

THIRD DIVISION
– Albion Rovers v East Stirling
– Berwick v Cowdenbeath
– Dumbarton v Brechin
– Montrose v Stenhousemuir
– Ross County v Queen's Park

FOOTBALL CONFERENCE
– Dover v Kettering
– Forest Green v Northwich
– Hereford v Farnborough
– Morecambe v Leek

KYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Aylesbury v Purfleet; Bromley v Sutton Utd; Dagenham & Redbridge v Hampton; Harrow Borough v Aldershot; Walton & Hersham v Bishop's Stortford. **First Division:** Berkhamsted v Croydon; Canvey Island v Barton Rovers; Grays Athletic v Bognor Regis; Hitchin v Leyton Pennant; Leatherhead v Whyteleafe; Maidenhead v Romford; Molesey v Yeading; Staines v Oxford City; Uxbridge v Wealdstone; Wembley v Chertsey; Worthing v Braintree. **Second Division:** Banstead v Thame; Barking v Hungerford; Bedford Town v Northwood; Bracknell v Horsham; Edgware v Wokingham; Hemel Hempstead v Tooting & Mitcham; Marlow v Hertford; Windsor & Eton v Witham; Wivenhoe v Harlow. **Third Division:** Chesham v Southall; Clapton v Corinthian Casuals; Croydon Athletic v Tilbury; Dorking v Egham; East Thurrock v Kingsbury; Fladwell Heath v Hornchurch; Tring v Aveley; Ware v Lewes.

UNIBOND LEAGUE Premier Division: Accrington Stanley v Gainsborough; Bamber Bridge v Spennymoor; Bishop Auckland v Altrincham; Chorley v Stalybridge; Frickley v Guiseley; Hyde v Colwyn Bay; Winsford v Blyth Spartans; Worksop v Matlock. **First Division:** Alfreton v Netherfield; Ashton Utd v Belper; Congleton v Radcliffe Borough; Eastwood Town v Harrogate Town; Farsley Celtic v Droylsden; Flixton v Bradford Park Avenue; Gretna v Maclock; Hucknall v Whitley Bay; Lincoln Utd v Burscough; Witton Albion v Trafford. **Challenge Cup second round:** Whitby v Gateshead.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: *Crawley v Gloucester; Halesowen* Town v Merthyr Tydfil; Hastings v Nuneaton; Ilkeston v Bath City; Rothwell v Bromsgrove; Weymouth v King's Lynn. **Midland Division:** Silston v Stamford; Bloswich v Newport (Gwent); Cinderford v Moor Green; Clevedon v Bedworth; Hinckley Utd v Evesham; Paget Rangers v VS Rugby; Racing Warwick v Sutton Coldfield; Shepshed Dynamo v Redditch; Solihull Borough v Wisbech; Stourbridge v Blakenall; Weston-super-Mare v Stafford Rangers. **Southern Division:** Andover v Erith & Belvedere; Ashford v Havant & Waterlooville; Baldock v St Leonards; Brackley v Witney; Chelmsford v Margate; Cirencester v Basildon; Corby v Sittingbourne; Dartford v Newport (IoW); Fleet v Fisher Athletic; Tonbridge v Folkestone Invicta; Yate v Raunds.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE Premier Division: Canterbury v Cray; Chatham v Sheppey; Crockenhill v Lordswood; Deal v Herne Bay; Faversham v Erith Town; Greenwich Borough v Tunbridge Wells; Hythe v VCD Athletic; Thamesmead v Ramsgate; Whitstable v Slade Green.

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Blackstone v Wootton; Bourne v St Neots; Buckingham v Eynesbury; Ford Sports v Stotfold; Holbeach v Kempston; Long Buckby v Desborough; Potton v Spalding; Stewarts & Lloyds Corby v Boston Town; Yaxley v Wellingborough.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First Division: Broadbridge Heath v Chichester; East Preston v Ringmer; Eastbourne Utd v Horsham YMCA; Hailsham v Wick; Langney Sports v Littlehampton; Saltdean v Redhill; Shoreham v Eastbourne Town Whitehawk; v Portfield. **John O'Hara League Cup third round:** Pagham v Burgess Hill.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Backwell v Odd Down; Bristol Manor Farm v Brislington; Chippenham v Bridport; Keynsham v Bridgwater; Mangotsfield v Bishop Sutton; Paulton Rovers v Elmore; Taunton v Yeovil; Tiverton v Westbury. **Les Phillips Cup first round:** Bideford v Calne; Ilfracombe v Pewsey Vale; Minehead v Melksham.

NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE First Division: Bootle v Maine Road; Clitheroe v Prescot Cables; Holker Old Boys v Ramsbottom; Leek CSOB v Atherton Collieries; Mossley v St Helens; Newcastle Town v Cheadle; Rossendale v Glossop North End; Salford v Atherton LR; Skelmersdale v Kidsgrove; Workington v Nantwich. **League Cup first round:** Daisy Hill v Colne.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE CUP Second round: Armthorpe Welfare v Glasshoughton Welfare; Arnold v Rossington Main; Blaxton v Brigg; Eccleshill v Ossett Town; Garforth v Liversedge; Tadcaster v Pickering; Louth v Ossett Albion; Maltby Main v Hall Road Rangers; Parkgate v North Ferriby; Staveley MW v Thackley; Winterton Rangers v Selby; Yorkshire *Amateur v Hallam.*

INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Barwell v Stourport Swifts; Boldmere St Michaels v Rushall Olympic; Chasetown v Halesowen Harriers; Knypersley Victoria v Stratford; Oldbury v King's Norton; Rocester v Pershore; Sandwell Borough v Willenhall; Shifnal v Pelsall Villa; Stapenhill v West Midlands Police; Wednesfield v Bridgnorth.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Bemerton Heath v Gosport; Brockenhurst v Newbury; Downton v Totton; Fareham v Christchurch; Lymington & New Milton v Hamble; Moneyfields v East Cowes Vics; Thatcham v Cowes Sports; Whitchurch v Portsmouth RN; Wimborne v Bournemouth.

JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Division: Bury Town v Sudbury Wanderers; Ely v Wroxham; Fakenham v Ipswich Wanderers; Felixstowe v Lowestoft; Gorleston v Histon; Harwich & Parkeston v Stowmarket; Maldon v Diss; Sudbury Town v Soham; Warboys v Great Yarmouth; Watton v Newmarket; Woodbridge v Halstead.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Billingham Town v South Shields; Chester-le-Street v Tow Law; Consett v Crook; Dunston FB v Billingham Synthonia; Guisborough v Easington; Jarrow v Stockton; Marske v Penrith; Morpeth v Shildon; Newcastle Blue Star v Seaham Red Star.

LEAGUE OF WALES: Bangor City v Aberystwyth (2.30); Caernarfon v Connah's Quay Nomads (2.30); Conwy v Caersws (2.30); Holywell v Carmarthen (2.30); Inter Cable-Tel Cardiff v TNS Llansantffraid (2.30); Newtown v Afan Lido (2.30); Rhyl v Barry (2.30).

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Brora Rangers; Cove Rangers v Peterhead; Elgin City v Wick Academy; Forres Mechanics v Keith; Huntly v Deveronvale; Lossiemouth v Buckie Thistle; Nairn County v Fort William; Rothes v Fraserburgh.

SCOTTISH QUALIFYING CUP Final (South): Whitehill Welfare v Civil Service Strollers (*at Stenhousemuir FC*).

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE Premier Division: Cliftonville v Crusaders; Coleraine v Linfield; Glentoran v Newry; Omagh v Glenavon; Portadown v Ballymena. **First Division:** Bangor v Dungannon Swifts; Distillery v Ballyclare Comrades; Larne v Ards; Limavady v Carrick Rangers.

HOCKEY

3.0 unless stated

EHL Premier League: Beeston v Teddington (1.30); Brooklands v Old Loughtonians (1.45); Cannock v Reading (1.0); East Grinstead v Guildford (2.0); Hounslow v Canterbury (1.30); Southgate v Bournville Birmingham Univ. (2.0).

First Division: Chelmsford v Bromley (2.15); Doncaster v Hampstead & Westminster (12.0); Harleston Magpies v Barford Tigers (1.30); Havant v Loughborough Students (2.0); Hull v Isca (2.0); Indian Gymkhana v Oxford Univ. (2.0); Lewes v Stourport (1.30); Oxford Hawks v Firebrands (2.0); St Albans v Eastcote (2.0); Sheffield v Surbiton (1.45).

DTZ MIDLAND Premier: Edgbaston v Leek; Hampton-in-Arden v Northampton Saints; Harborne v Coventry & North Warwick; Khalsa v Nottingham; Olton & West Warwick v North Staffs; Shrewsbury v N Notts.

SOUTH Premier: Beckenham v Herne Bay; Blackheath v Chichester; Bournemouth v Old Whitgiftians; City of Portsmouth v Anchorians; Fareham v Maidenhead; Old Cranleighans v Wokingham; Richmond v Gore Court; Tunbridge Wells v Woking; Wimbledon v High Wycombe; Winchester v Purley.

PREMIER HOLIDAYS EAST Premier: Bedford Town v Clacton; Bishops Stortford v Cambridge University; Blueharts v Cambridge City; Colchester v Peterborough Town; Ipswich v West Herts.

NORTH Premier: Bowdon v Ben Rhydding; Chester v Harrogate; Norton v Durham University; Rotherham v Neston; Sheffield Bankers v Formby; Warrington v Southport.

WEST OF ENGLAND & SOUTH WALES Premier: Bath Buccaneers v Weston-Super-Mare; Cheltenham v Gloucester City; Taunton Vale v West Wilts; Whitchurch v Robinsons; Yeovil & Sherborne v Swansea.

WOMEN'S EHL Premier: Ipswich v Hightown (12.0); Leicester v Clifton (12.30); Olton Terraquest v Doncaster (11.0); Slough v Sutton Coldfield (12.0).

First Division: Aldridge v Sunderland Ashbrooke (1.30); Bradford v Loughborough Students (12.0); Canterbury v Wimbledon (12.0); Trojans v Chelmsford H'way (1.30).

Second Division: Bracknell v Sherwood (2.0); Ealing v St Albans (12.0); Old Loughtonians v Hampton-in-Arden (1.0); Poynton v Woking (11.30).

WOMEN'S MIDLAND Premier: Belper v Bedford; Crimson Ramblers v Luton; Kettering v North Staffs; Loughborough Students v Olton & West Warwick.

WOMEN'S NORTH First Division: Deeside Ramblers v Liverpool; Don Valley v Blackburn; Leyland Motors v Chester; Winnington Park v Sheffield.

WOMEN'S EAST Premier: Bury St Edmunds v Harleston Magpies; Cambridge City v Letchworth; Dereham v Blueharts; Ipswich v Ashford.

WOMEN'S WEST Premier: Bournemouth v Portishead; Exeter v Redland; Exmouth v Colwall; Leominster v St Austell; Taunton Vale v Cheltenham.

WOMEN'S SOUTH First Division: City of Portsmouth v Winchester; Hendon v West Witney; Horsham v Dulwich; Reading v Maidenhead; Tulse Hill v Rover Cowley.

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Nottingham Panthers v Newcastle Riverkings (7.0); Ayr Scottish Eagles v Manchester Storm (6.30).

RUGBY LEAGUE

LINCOLN THIRD TEST
Great Britain v New Zealand ..... (6.0, *at Vicarage Road, Watford*)

RUGBY UNION

3.0 unless stated

INTERNATIONAL MATCH
Wales v South Africa ..... (*at Wembley*)

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING MATCHES
POOL ONE
Ireland v Georgia ..... (*at Lansdowne Road*)
POOL TWO
England v The Netherlands ..... (*at McAlpine stadium, Huddersfield*)

TOUR MATCH
Scotland v New Zealand Maoris ..... (*at Murrayfield*)

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE
London Scottish v London Irish .....

TETLEY'S BITTER CUP Third Round: Blackheath v Sedgley Park; Bracknell v Met Police (2.15); Coventry v Worcester; Esher v Harrogate; Exeter v Whitchurch; Hull Ionians v Newbury (2.15); Lydney v Stourbridge; Morley v Maidenhead; Nottingham v Wharfedale; Reading v Orrell (2.30); Rosslyn Park v Henley (2.00); Rotherham v London Welsh (2.15); Swansea & Wareham v Barking (2.15); Wakefield v Kendal (2.30); Waterloo v New Brighton (2.15). **JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE Two North:** Walsall v Nuneaton (2.30). **Two South:** Cheltenham v Bridgwater (2.30).

TOMORROW

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Milton Keynes Lions v Newcastle Eagles (4.0); Sheffield Sharks v Greater London Leopards (4.0).

CRICKET

TOUR MATCH (Cairns, third day of four): Queensland v England.

FOOTBALL

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP
Coventry v Everton (4.0) .....

AXA FA CUP FIRST ROUND
Boreham Wood v Luton (1.0) .....
Emley v Rotherham (1.0) .....
(*at Oakwell, Barnsley*)
Fulham v Leigh RMI (3.0) .....
Hendon v Notts County (1.0) .....

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
Dunfermline v Dundee Utd (6.05) .....

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Derry City v Sligo Rovers (3.15); Finn Harps v Bray Wanderers (3.15); Shamrock Rovers v Cork City (3.15).

BRENDAN ORSMBY TESTIMONIAL: Gorforth & Leeds Utd XI v Aston Villa XI (2.0).

HOCKEY

2.0 unless stated

EHA CUP Third round: Beckenham v Wimbledon (12.0); Blackheath v Old Georgians (2.30); Bournemouth v Indian Gymkhana (1.0); Bournville v Peterborough Town; Bromley v Trojans (1.0); Cannock v Beeston; Canterbury v Cambridge City (12.0). Chelmsford v Yeovil & Sherborne (12.0); Clacton v Eastcote (1.30); Doncaster v Barford Tigers; Edgbaston v Brooklands (12.0); Epsom v Winchester (1.30); Firebrands v Southgate; Guildford v Old Loughtonians (12.0); Harleston Magpies v Teddington; Harrogate v Khalsa; Havant v Reading; Hull v Northampton Saints; Isca v Chichester (1.30); Lewes v Blueharts (12.30); Neston v Loughborough Students (12.15); Norton v Preston (1.0), Nottingham v Olton & West Warwick (2.15); Old Cranleighans v Hampstead & Westminster (1.0); Old de Fernans v East Grinstead; Oxford Hawks v Hounslow (12.30); Phoenix v Pelicans (1.30); Richmond v Sudbury (1.30); Robinsons v Letchworth (11.30); Sheffield v Coventry & North Warwick; Stourport v Bowdon; Surbiton v St Albans.

WOMEN'S EHA CUP Third round: Aldridge v Letchworth (12.30); Banbury v Woking (1.30); Basingstoke v Trojans (1.30); Billingham v Morpeth (12.0); Blackburn Northern v Bromsgrove, Canterbury v Worcester Norton: Crosby v Hightown; Driffield v Northampton (1.30); Dulwich v Sunderland Ashbrooke (12.30). Ealing v Old Loughtonians (3.30); Eastbourne v Epsom (1.0); Exeter v Chester; Exmouth v Harleston Magpies (1.30); Hampton-in-Arden v Ipswich (1.0); Havant v Slough (11.30); Kettering v Doncaster (1.0); Leyland Motors v Bury St Edmunds (12.30); Liverpool Sefton v Wallington; Luton Town v Basildon; Maidenhead v Horsham (2.15); Middleton & Bognor v Loughborough Students (3.0); Olton Terraquest v Sunbury (12.30); Pickwick Old Sils v Bradford (1.30); Sheffield v Matlock Balleans (12.0); Sherwood v West Witney; St Albans v Fyffes Leicester (12.30); Sutton Coldfield v St Austell (12.15); Tulse Hill v Poynton; Welton v Bracknell (12.0); Wimbledon v Surbiton (1.30); Winchmore Hill v Chelmsford Highway (12.30).

ICE HOCKEY

SEKONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Cardiff Devils v Sheffield Steelers (6.0); Bracknell Bees v Nottingham Panthers (6.0); Newcastle Riverkings v Manchester Storm (6.30).

RUGBY UNION

3.0 unless stated

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP ONE
Bedford v Saracens
Newcastle v Northampton
Wasps v Lester

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
Blackwood v Newbridge (2.30)

ANGLO-WELSH FRIENDLIES
Cardiff v Gloucester

TETLEY'S BITTER CUP Third Round: Bristol v Sandal (2.30). Moseley v Fylde (2.30). Rugby v Leeds.

TENNENTS VELVET CUP Third Round (2.0 unless stated): Alloa v Strathmore; Ayr v Carrick, Biggar v Annan; Boroughmuir v Howe of Fife; Cumnock v Stewarts Mel FP, Dalziel v Kirkcaldy; Dunfermline v Langholm. East Kilbride v Selkirk; Gala v Gordonians; Glasgow Southern v Glasgow Hawks, Greenock Wanderers v Melrose; Haddington v Ross High, Hawick v Berwick, Hawick Linden v Edinburgh Acads, Heriots FP v Glenrothes, Hillhead Jordanhill v St Boswells; Hutchesons' Aloysian v Allan Glen's; Irvine v Stewartry; Jed-Forest v Preston Lodge; Kelso v Lenzie, Kilmarnock v Hyndland FP; Linlithgow v Stirling County; Morgan Acad FP v Elion, Murrayfield v Carna O P, Musselburgh v Grangemouth, Peebles v Livingston, Perthshire v Royal Dick VC; Portobello FP v Currie; Strathaven v Watsonians, Trinity Acads v Dundee HSFP, Waysiders Drumpellie v Aberdeen GSFP, West of Scotland v Camburlang

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

TRANSFERS
Free transfers or undisclosed fees unless stated

Jermaine McSporran (forward) Oxford City to Wycombe Wanderers (undisclosed). **Tony Witter** (defender) Northampton to Torquay (free); **Paul Stanger** (defender) Charlton to Brighton (free); **Bjarne Goldbaek** (midfielder) FC Copenhagen (Den) to Chelsea; **Mauricio Taricco** (defender) Ipswich to Tottenham (£1.775m).

LOANS AND TRIALS

Paul Gibson (goalkeeper) Manchester United to Hull City.
Paul Hughes (midfielder) Chelsea to Bristol City (trial).
Keith Dublin (defender) Southend to Colchester (loan).
Craig Dudley (forward) Notts County to Hull City
Jason Crowe (defender) Arsenal to Crystal Palace.

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

Graham determined to silence the Gunners

BY PHIL SHAW

THE LAST time George Graham entered the Highbury boardroom, nearly four years ago, it was to be told that his eight, trophy-laden years as manager were over.

Today, in a bid to bury the hatchet, Arsenal have invited Graham up for a drink after the derby against his Tottenham side. In the event of Spurs beating the Double winners, he may be sorely tempted to take up the offer. However, Graham's sense of betrayal by certain directors is reputedly so strong that he is unlikely to socialise. Instead, he will settle for making the Gunners fall silent.

Arsenal's supporters gave him a warm welcome on the three occasions he returned with Leeds. But that is likely to be withheld now that he is in charge of their detested rivals, with the Spurs contingent doubtless being reminded in song that "George Graham is an Arsenal fan".

Graham's four Premiership matches in charge at White Hart Lane have produced only four points. Yet there were signs in both the 3-2 loss at Villa Park and Tuesday's 3-1 win at Liverpool in the Worthington Cup that he has already turned Spurs into a more competitive unit.

His belief, with which only the most anachronistic adherents of the "Tottenham way" could argue, is that players must be as effective when the opposition have the ball as in possession. If he could deliver only their second success in 14 visits to Arsenal, even those who continue to view him as the great Satan of N5 might be won over.

The way Arsène Wenger has steered the champions into second place, despite patchy performances and the draining effects of the Champions' League, commands their former manager'a respect. Adding spice to an occasion which hardly needs it, Graham's old captain, Tony Adams, is set to return after injury.

It promises to be quite an afternoon for managerial firsts. The collision of Liverpool and Leeds, which used to be a bone-crunchingly intense battle of wits between Bill Shankly and Don Revie, is Gérard Houllier'a opening match in sole charge of the Anfield club.

The Frenchman, who must launch the post-Boot Room era without Michael Owen and Steve McManaman, is actually an old hand compared with his opposite number. David O'Leary'a three weeks as Graham'a successor at Elland Road have seen the Yorkshire side eliminated from two cups, and precedent provides few positive pointers for him today.

Liverpool's 2-0 defeat of Leeds in Dublin in a summer tournament would count for little had it not confirmed a pattern. Since losing to Tony Yeboah's memorable volley three years ago, they have rattled up 19 goals to Leeds' one in winning six of their seven meetings.

In 18 trips to Liverpool, Leeds have scraped just four points and as many goals. More pertinently, they seem incapable of holding an advantage on their travels. Leading in the final third of four away games, they drew them all, taking the trait to new extremes by losing at Leicester in the Worthington Cup after entering the 88th minute 1-0 up.

The lesser of the national knockout competitions may have saved Roy Hodgson's bacon at Blackburn. Squeezing through at Newcastle has certainly rescued their season, although Old Trafford is the last place to try to build on a good result.

The memory of Manchester United's 4-0 romp a year ago, when Hodgson's aspirations concerned winning the title rather than avoiding relegation, is still fresh. So, too, will Alex Ferguson's team be after their understudies took the stage in midweek. Peter Schmeichel is assured of an emotional ovation after announcing that this is his final season.

The reception at Southampton for those with a Portsmouth pedigree tends to be hostile. John Gregory, who endured a deceptively poor start in management along the south coast, will laugh it off, especially if Aston Villa at least maintain their two-point lead at the top.

Villa, remarkably, have taken 52 points out of 66 since Gregory's appointment: title form by any standards. But with Liverpool, United and Arsenal all visiting them in the next month, they can ill afford to let the reviving Saints spoil their unbeaten start.

Cottee approaches the elite 200 club

'Old git' he may be, but the veteran striker remains a potent attacking force for Leicester. By **Phil Shaw**

NEW YEAR'S Day, 1983. Maggie and Denis are ensconced in No 10 after victory in the Falklands, Renee and Renato remain in residence at No 1 with "Save Your Love For Me" and a 17-year-old East Ender dons West Ham's No 8 shirt for the first time.

The visitors, Tottenham, are holding their own until Joe Gallagher rises to Geoff Pike's cross. The cry of "Goal!" sticks in 33,000 throats when Ray Clemence tips the ball on to the bar, then explodes into the freezing air as the diminutive debutant heads the rebound into the net.

Tony Cottee returns to Upton Park today with Leicester City and 197 League goals to his name. The soul-boy fringe long since gave way to the slicked-back look, the pace he once allied to strength and suppleness is no longer blistering, and at 33 he accepts that Martin O'Neill is right to look for a younger striker rather than rely on "old gits like me".

Yet the instinct for being "in the right place at the right time", as he defines it, is still serving Cottee well. "It's been said that Mark Hughes is a scorer of great goals rather than a great goalscorer," he says. "I'd like to think the opposite applies to me. In a career total of over 270 I can only think of about 10 fantastic ones. The vast majority have been tap-ins or rebounds."

By claiming five of Leicester's 11 in the Premiership, he has outscored the £10m-rated Emile Heskey. Why, he chuckles, he "only" needs a hat-trick today to chalk up the double century he has targeted as compensation for a medal-free career.

"But that would be fantasy stuff," Cottee muses before recalling a precedent to prove that anything is possible, "the kind of thing that happened on my Everton debut."

Whatever today brings, after a week spent striving to shrug off a thigh strain, he is "100 per cent confident" of reaching the landmark that only five current players have passed. "I'll play until I'm 56 if I have to! Even if I never score for Leicester again and have to drop down to somewhere like Leyton Orient, I'll do it."

The same sense of certainty has been reflected in Cottee'a finishing from an early age. "Even at seven I was aware that I had a different talent from other kids. Goalscoring has always been the easy part for me. It's the rest of it I've found hard.

"People say to me now that I've lost a yard, and they're right, but I tell them I'm still quick up here," he says, pointing to his head. "You can't take a young boy on to the training pitch and say: 'This is where you've got to stand', because in match situations you have to make split-second decisions and try to anticipate things. With that first goal for West Ham, I didn't stand there thinking 'What a great header by Joe' but 'I'll go in just in case it comes out off the keeper or the woodwork'."

Having joined his entire extended family in becoming a "massive" Hammers fan in the 1970s, Cottee soon found a role model. Bryan "Pop" Robson, a classic penalty-box predator who could score with either foot or his head, remains his inspiration.

"I remember when Pop got to 200 League goals and thinking 'how fantastic'. That became my target and I've slowly crept towards it."

Not that slowly. Cottee's reputation as a serial marksman earned the first of seven England caps two months after his 21st birthday, and when he first left West Ham it was for a British record fee of £2.3m. Despite choosing Everton in preference to Arsenal, where George Graham would soon be awash with silverware, he is adamant the move was not ill-advised.

"I believe that once you've made a decision you can't start regretting it with hindsight. People say: 'You'd have won two championships there' or tell me that Arsenal would never have signed Ian Wright. But who can say what would have happened? I could have gone there and got a terrible injury. It's all ifs, buts and maybes.

"I'm always hearing how it went badly for me at Everton but I got 99 goals and was top scorer in five of my six seasons there. I loved the club and our lifestyle in Southport. The only sadness was not winning anything. I joined in '88, a year after they last won the title, and left in '94, a year before they won the FA Cup, which sums up my Goodison career."

Cottee could scarcely have started better on Merseyside, the first of his three against Newcastle arriving after just 34 seconds. There was, he suggests in typically self-mocking mode, only one way it could go after that, although Evertonians still talk fondly of the pair he poached in a 4-4 draw with Liverpool in the FA Cup as an 85th-minute substitute.

'In my career I can only think of about 10 fantastic ones – most have been tap-ins'

When the chance came to go "home" to West Ham, he took it. However, it was a period of transition and Cottee found himself marginalised by Harry Redknapp's foreign recruits. He was leading scorer in both his seasons back in London, but "got the vibes" that he was not wanted and opted for a lucrative stint in Malaysian football.

After nine months he was back, joining Leicester in August last year. "It didn't really work out over there and I probably left the Premiership too early. I also found it hard adjusting to the change in standards and heat there and didn't do myself any favours at first."

A loan spell with Birmingham, where he scored his only lower-division goal, helped Cottee to regain sharpness. In January he collected Leicester's winner at Old Trafford – "my first there in 15 years of trying" – and he has maintained a steady flow ever since.

He can recall "almost every goal" and has scrapbooks of cuttings dating back to primary school to help him. Although agreeing that his goals tend not to be memorable, he regards stealing in front of defenders as a talent equal to, say, spectacular long-range shooting. "I always say that every goal is a great goal," he says.

Not that his own are all nudged in from spitting distance. Cottee nominates an overhead kick against Nottingham Forest in 1987 as his best. And while Leicester's jesters tease him about why he bothers to practise shooting from outside the 18-yard area, he once chipped Sheffield Wednesday's keeper from half as far again.

The length of Cottee's service means that his judgements on colleagues and adversaries carry genuine authority. He has a burgeoning rapport with Heskey, whose potential he terms "awesome", and cites Peter Beardsley, Graeme Sharp and Paul Goddard among his most productive partners. But as the outstanding Renee to his Renato he names Frank McAvennie.

Heading the list of difficult opponents are Alan Hansen, Paul McGrath and Tony Adams; but for their vigilance and the Asian interlude he would have broken the 200 barrier long ago. The same is true of his dislike of taking penalties. It is not that Cottee is daunted by the pressure, simply that he would sooner prosper by living off his wits.

"A penalty is almost not like a goal to me because it's staged. It's basically a free shot. I've heard Alan Shearer say completely the opposite and how it's a great way to get more goals. It probably is, but the few I've scored have never given me the buzz I get if it comes from open play."

All the same, if the referee points to the spot, and the "old git" in Leicester's No 27 top has already popped in a couple, separating him from the ball could prove problematic.

Tony Cottee is back at Upton Park today, the former West Ham goalscorer now in Leicester's colours, his instinct for being "in the right place at the right time" still intact *Robert Hallam*

THE 200 CLUB: THE FIVE STILL PLAYING AND SCORING

STEVE BULL

Wolves 252

John Aldridge's retirement left "Bully", 33, as the top scorer in League matches. His first goals came in 1986 for West Brom, but the other 250 were all for his beloved Wolves. September's winner v Bury could be his last due to knee problems, though he promises "a hell of a go" at reaching 300.

IAN RUSH

Wrexham 246

January marks the second anniversary of Rush's last League goal, one of just three he scored for Leeds. The Welshman, 37, has come almost full circle by joining the neighbours of his first club, Chester. All but 17 of his haul came with Liverpool, either side of a seven-goal sabbatical at Juventus.

IAN WRIGHT

West Ham 223

A late starter who did not score his first League goal until a month before his 22nd birthday, Wright went on to amass 89 for Crystal Palace and 128 in fewer matches for Arsenal. Now 35, he broke Cliff Bastin's overall record for the Gunners before joining West Ham, where he already has six this season.

TONY ADCOCK

Colchester 212

A 35-year-old Cockney, "Rooster" Adcock's goals have all come in the lower divisions. At Colchester, whom he left for Manchester City in 1988 in the first of seven moves, he needs five to beat the club record of 130. Last netted on Boxing Day; since freed, reinstated and injured, but now playing again.

PETER BEARDSLEY

Fulham 206

Gary Lineker's selfless England foil, Beardsley also helped himself at Newcastle (107 League goals in two spells), Liverpool and Everton, while failing to register for either Manchester club. At 37, he is back at Second Division level, where he first scored for Carlisle in 1979, and has three for Fulham this season.

Ipswich fear Fjortoft

NATIONWIDE PREVIEW

THE IPSWICH Town manager, George Burley, hopes his defence can contain Jan Aage Fjortoft during today'a trip to Barnsley. Ipswich are second in the First Division, and will be anxious to keep in touch with the unbeaten leaders, Sunderland, who face Port Vale at Vale Park. "Jan Aage Fjortoft has a very good scoring record against us, so we will have to put that right," Burley said.

The Birmingham City captain, Chris Marsden, is convinced the Blues will have a major say in the promotion race, with Peter Ndlovu, Dele Adebola and Paul Furlong spearheading their attack. Third-placed City entertain struggling Oxford, and Marsden said: "When the three of them are on song they're as good as any front three in this division."

Crewe midfielder Seth Johnson, meanwhile, believes his team can climb off the bottom of the division as they prepare to face fellow strugglers Queens Park Rangers at Gresty Road. "We're not worried about our position. We were bottom at Christmas last season and still reached safety," he said.

The Tranmere manager, John Aldridge, wants his side to atone for their midweek defeat against Bradford when they tackle Bolton at the Reebok Stadium. "We want to bounce back after our first defeat in eight games," he said.

Wanderers have won just one of their last seven, but their manager, Colin Todd said: "I'm confident we will turn the corner."

Wolverhampton Wanderers' caretaker manager, Colin Lee, is delighted with how well his players have responded to him following Mark McGhee's departure. Wolves are aiming to make it three wins in a row against Norwich at Carrow Road, and Lee said: "I owe the last two victories to the players."

Bury manager Neil Warnock is hoping Adrian Littlejohn can score on his debut against his old club Sheffield United at Bramall Lane. The striker completed his £75,000 transfer from Oldham yesterday, and Warnock said: "What a fairy-tale it would be if he opens his account for us at Bramall Lane."

Celtic bid 'very positive'

BY MARK BURTON

KENNY DALGLISH and Jim Kerr, who are leading a consortium looking to takeover Celtic, yesterday proclaimed their proposals to be "very positive" for the club, and their consortium is seeking a meeting with Celtic's majority shareholder, Fergus McCann.

In a statement issued on behalf of the consortium, Dalglish and Kerr said: "We believe our proposals are very positive for the future of Celtic Football Club and look forward to discussing these in detail with Mr McCann."

The consortium includes Jim McAvoy, a businessman, and the financial backers BT Capital Partners Europe, the London-based private equity investing arm of Bankers Trust.

Their backers have solid business credentials and there appears little doubt over the consortium's ability either to raise the money for the takeover or to finance their future, but the main stumbling block could still be McCann's declared intention to dispose of his investment among existing shareholders. Fan support for the Dalglish-Kerr move could, though, aid their cause.

The supporters want Celtic to build on last May's title and again become the dominant force not only in Scotland and in Europe.

The difficulty in reaching the top is exemplified by another former European champions, Aston Villa, who have accepted that, despite being top of the Premiership, they will not be able to keep their goalkeeper, Mark Bosnich, at the end of the season. The Australian international, who is out of contract in June, has been linked with Manchester United following Peter Schmeichel's decision to leave the English game at the end of the season.

With leading clubs like Arsenal and Liverpool importing French managers, it comes as no surprise that the Football Association would be willing to appoint a foreigner as England coach when the time comes to find Glenn Hoddle's successor.

Noel White, the chairman of the FA's international selection committee, claimed the appointment would purely be made on the basis of track record and not of nationality.

Weekend guide to the Premiership

MATCH OF THE DAY

Arsenal v Tottenham

Last season: 0-0

BY NICK HARRIS

ENTERTAINING THOUGH the sideshow that George Graham's return to Highbury may be, the serious issue of whether Spurs can dent Arsenal's pursuit of Aston Villa at the top of the Premiership will be the main business of the day.

The Gunners moved to within two points of Villa thanks to Nicolas Anelka's goal against Everton last Sunday, and the injury problems that had been threatening to hamper Arsène Wenger's side had started to abate. Of particular glee to the French manager will be the fact that Dennis Bergkamp (left) came through Wednesday's 5-0 Worthington Cup mauling by Chelsea unharmed and should start today, and that Tony Adams is also likely to be on the pitch come 3' o clock.

Arsenal will be looking to avoid what would be an unpalatable second successive home defeat after the rout suffered in midweek. Even if Wenger did only field three regular first-team players against the men from Stamford Bridge, it was a result that can hardly have done much for the confidence of the club. The recent Swedish international signing, Fredrik Ljungberg, said that no professional liked to lose a match 5-0 and it was the worst experience of his career.

"So, we had some reserves in the side, but that was no excuse," he said. "It is very difficult to speak about a loss like that, the biggest defeat I have ever had. I don't really know what went wrong. Of course, we will have different players playing against Tottenham, and I am sure we will bounce back, but the whole club needs a lift after such a loss."

Bergkamp has missed the last two League matches and will be keen to rediscover the goalscoring touch that brought him 19 goals last season. He has only scored twice this season, and says the defeat against Chelsea will have no bearing on the north London derby.

"I am more than hopeful I will be able to play against Tottenham," he said. "And I don't think there is any relevance between the Chelsea game and the Spurs game. It will be a different team in a different competition." Arsenal could be without Steve Bould who has a hamstring strain. Tottenham, meanwhile, who will be hoping the fine recent form of Steffen Iversen (right) continues, may be without David Ginola, who has a calf strain that could keep him out. Tottenham's four League matches since Graham took charge have produced one win, one draw and two narrow defeats to Leicester and Aston Villa to leave them in 14th place. There is no doubt their defence is looking tighter. Familiar, that.

ARSENAL (probable): Seaman, Winterburn, Keown, Adams, Dixon, Overmars, Petit, Vieira, Parlour, Anelka, Patrick Ljungberg.
TOTTENHAM (probable): Baardsen, Carr, Campbell, Vega, Calderwood, Scales, Anderton, Nielsen, Clemence, Sinton, Garcia, Allen, Fox, Iversen.
Injuries: Arsenal: None confirmed. **Tottenham:** Ferdinand, Armstrong, Edinburgh.
Suspensions: Arsenal: None. **Tottenham:** None.
Referee: A Wilkie.

Charlton v Middlesbrough

Last season: 3-0

PAUL GASCOIGNE may have been left out of Glenn Hoddle's latest England squad, but Bryan Robson is certain to have him in the starting line-up today as the North-east side have a chance to judge just how far they have come in the past year. The last time the two met at The Valley, on 10 January, the home side won 3-0 with two goals from Shaun Newton and another from Mark Bright. It was not Boro's heaviest defeat of the season, but it was considered the match in which they were most comprehensively outplayed.

Charlton's Keith Jones faces a late test on knee and back injuries while the Republic of Ireland are still insisting on Mark Kinsella's release for the build-up to next Wednesday's Euro *2000* qualifier with Yugoslavia in Belgrade. Mark Schwarzer is in line for a Middlesbrough comeback in goal after missing five league and cup games with an ankle injury. This fixture in October 1960 finished 6-6, with Brian Clough scoring a hat-trick.

CHARLTON (from): Schwarzer, Beresford, Fleming, Cooper, Vickers, Festa, Gordon, Mustoe, Gascoigne, Townsend, Deane, Ricard, Beck, Stamp, Summerbell, Stockdale, Blackmore.
MIDDLESBROUGH (from): Schwarzer, Beresford, Fleming, Cooper, Vickers, Festa, Gordon, Mustoe, Gascoigne, Townsend, Deane, Ricard, Beck, Stamp, Summerbell, Stockdale, Blackmore.
Injuries: Charlton: Newton, Mortimer. **Boro:** Pallister.
Suspensions: Charlton: None. **Boro:** None.
Referee: M. Riley.

Chelsea v Wimbledon

Last season: 1-1

BJARNE GOLDBAEK, Chelsea's Danish midfielder who swapped clubs with Brian Laudrup, is likely to make his Premiership debut. Goldbaek was on the pitch for '77 minutes in the 5-0 midweek Worthington Cup defeat of Arsenal. Gianluca Vialli has named himself in the 18-man squad following his two-goals against Arsenal. In the absence of injured Pierluigi Casiraghi the Chelsea player-manager will continue to compete for a place up by impressing himself sufficiently up front ahead of Gianfranco Zola and Tore Andre Flo. The Blues have not beaten the Dons in a Premiership match at Stamford Bridge since a 2-0 win in March 1994.

Wimbledon's manager Joe Kinnear has plenty of options up front today. Mark Kennedy, Michael Hughes and new signing Gareth Ainsworth are all after a place while Efan Ekoku, who has been kept out by injury for six weeks, is also back in the squad. The Dons could rise to fourth in the table by this evening if they win today and other results go their way.

CHELSEA (from): De Goey, Petrescu, Babayaro, Leboeuf, Desailly, Goldbaek, Poyet, Vialli, Duberry, Hitchcock, Le Saux, Di Matteo, Ferrer, Flo, Lambourde, Nicholls, Kharine, Zola.
WIMBLEDON (from): Sullivan, Cunningham, Kimble, Perry, Blackwell, Thatcher, C Hughes, Earle, Ekoku, Roberts, Gayle, Ardley, Heald, Goodman, Leaburn, M Hughes, Ainsworth, Kennedy, Euell, Cort.
Injuries: Chelsea: Casiraghi. **Wimbledon:** No new injuries.
Suspensions: Chelsea: Wise. **Wimbledon:** None.
Referee: J. Winter.

Liverpool v Leeds Utd

Last season: 3-1

LIVERPOOL PROVED that two heads are not necessarily better than one but now Gérard Houllier has to prove that he alone, now that Roy Evans has resigned, can provide the antidote to the Anfield malaise.

The Frenchman might have asked for better circumstances to try going solo, deprived as he is by injuries to the England pair of Michael Owen and Steve McManaman for Leeds' visit to Anfield today. With good tidings in short supply, there is a good chance that Jamie Redknapp and Patrik Berger will be fit.

David O'Leary, so recently banished from pitch-side during Leeds' Uefa Cup campaign, now has cause to thank Uefa after the governing body cancelled the Under-18 tournament in Israel that England were due to be involved in, allowing Jonathon Woodgate to retain his place at the heart of the United defence.

The manager also has Ian Harte available to play as Fifa have waived the five-day ruling for the Republic of Ireland's rearranged Euro 2000 qualifier against Yugoslavia on Wednesday.

LIVERPOOL (from): James, Carragher, Staunton, Bjornebye, Leonhardsen, Fowler, Riedle, Redknapp, Ince, Thompson, Harkness, Heggem, Berger, Friedel, Murphy, Kvarme.
LEEDS (from): Martyn, Haaland, Wetherall, Sharpe, Wijnhard, Hasselbaink, Ribeiro, Bowyer, Hopkin, Granville, Lilley, Halle, Kewell, Harte, Hiden, Woodgate, Molenaar, Robinson.
Injuries: Liverpool: Babb, Owen, McManaman. **Leeds:** McPhail, Radebe.
Suspensions: Liverpool: McAteer. **Leeds:** None.
Referee: D Gallagher.

Manchester Utd v Blackburn

Last season: 4-0

MANCHESTER UNITED'S Andy Cole and Jesper Blomqvist have been passed fit. Cole has had treatment on a slight hamstring strain picked up during Sunday's game with Newcastle, and Blomqvist has recovered after a recurrence of problems with his foot. Phil Neville is also ready to step back as Alex Ferguson finds himself without both Denis Irwin and Roy Keane, who have joined Mick McCarthy's Republic of Ireland squad preparing for next week's *Euro 2000* qualifier against Yugoslavia. Nicky Butt looks certain to replace Keane as he starts his first Premiership game since 24 October.

Kevin Gallacher could return for Blackburn. He will be in the team providing he gets the referee's permission to play with strapping on his broken arm. Gallacher's return is tempered by the news that England goalkeeper Tim Flowers could be out until Christmas. Blackburn will also have Republic of Ireland duo Jeff Kenna and Damien Duff in their line up following Fifa's decision to allow them to take part. Nathan Blake, who was cup-tied in midweek at Newcastle, also returns along with Gallacher.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): Schmeichel, Brown, Stam, G Neville, P Neville, Beckham, Butt, Scholes, Blomqvist, Cole, Yorke, Solskjaer, Cruyff, Berg, Curtis, Clegg, van der Gouw.
BLACKBURN (from): Filan, Kenna, Henchoz, Peacock, Croft, Marcolin, Sherwood, Dailly, Johnson, Duff, Davies, Dunn, Ferris, Davidson, Thomas, Blake, Gallacher.
Injuries: Man Utd: None confirmed. **Blackburn:** Flowers.
Suspensions: Man Utd: None. **Blackburn:** None.
Referee: M. Reed.

... And statistics

Why title ambitions need London weighting

TODAY'S ENCOUNTER between Arsenal and Tottenham will not only be important for George Graham, successful alumnus of one and recently appointed manager of the other. The outcome of the match might also demonstrate whether the Gunners' dominance of fixtures in the capital in recent years still stands a chance of being maintained. A quarter of the games played by the six London clubs are derbies. To prosper in the Premiership, then, a London club has to prosper in the capital, which is precisely what Arsenal did last season.

The London Premiership 1997-98
(based on derbies in the capital)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Premiership position
Arsenal	10	6	4	0	17	3	22	1
Chelsea	10	6	1	3	25	12	19	4
West Ham	10	5	2	3	17	15	17	8
Tottenham	10	3	3	4	13	15	12	14
C Palace	10	2	2	6	9	23	8	20
Wimbledon	10	1	2	7	8	21	5	15

Arsenal gained 2.2 points on average from their London games last season and exactly 2 points per game from games against the 14 other clubs. Since Arsène Wenger arrived at Highbury in September 1996, Arsenal have lost only one London derby in 19 games, and that by a single Vinnie Jones goal to Wimbledon at Highbury on 23 February 1997.

This season, the story has not been so successful for Wenger, with just two goalless draws to show from the home game with Charlton in August and the away game at Stamford Bridge against Chelsea the following week. Early though the season may be, Arsenal are not faring well in this season's London Premiership. Wimbledon, who test their current London table-topping form with a trip to Chelsea today, have two wins from two games so far.

The London Premiership 1998-99

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Current League position
Wimbledon	2	2	0	0	7	4	6	10
Charlton	4	1	2	1	7	6	5	12
Chelsea	3	1	2	0	3	2	5	5
Arsenal	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Tottenham	2	0	1	1	3	5	1	14
[illegible]	3	[illegible]	1	2	6	9	1	9

Today's big match

In the 12 Arsenal against Tottenham games since the start of the Premiership, six have ended in draws. Arsenal have won twice (in November 1997 and August 1993) and Spurs have come out victorious four times. With today's matches at Highbury, Arsenal's three championships in the past 10 years bear comparison.

Arsenal titles of the past decade

Season	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Under George Graham							
1988-9	38	22	10	6	73	36	76
1990-1	38	24	13	1	74	18	85
Under Arsène Wenger							
1997-8	38	23	9	6	68	33	78

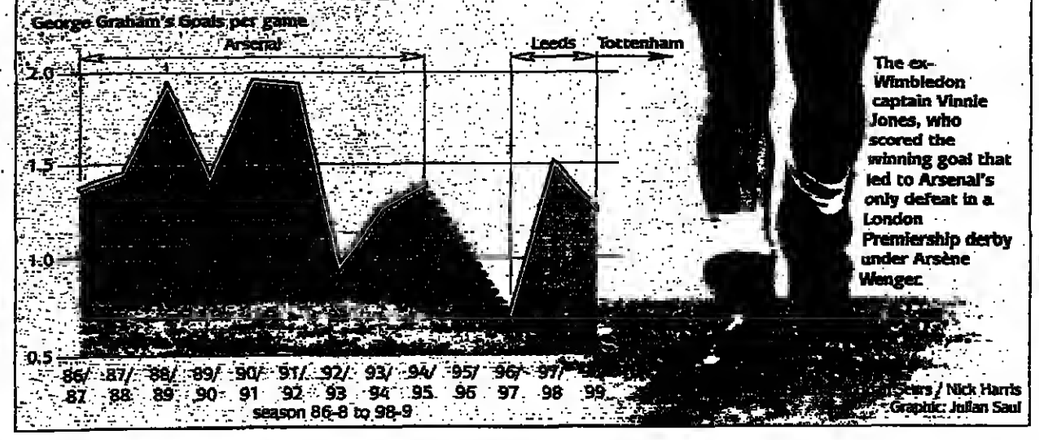
The similarity in the statistics from last year and nine years previously are beaten only in sameness by the Arsenal defence of those years - David Seaman, Lee Dixon, Nigel Winterburn, Steve Bould and Tony Adams.

The Graham Goal Standard

George Graham's Gunners were saddled with the 'boring boring Arsenal' chant but his heyday Arsenal teams scored only a fraction short of two goals per game throughout three of those seasons. His teams have failed to get anywhere near that standard since. Arsenal in 1992-3 and Leeds over the 33 games under Graham in 1996-7 failed to gain even a goal a game.

At least Tottenham are trying to escape those shackles – they have scored seven goals in the first four Premiership games – as well as three at Anfield in the Worthington Cup on Wednesday.

George Graham's Goals per game



The ex-Wimbledon captain Vinnie Jones, who scored the winning goal that led to Arsenal's only defeat in a London Premiership derby under Arsène Wenger.

Sears / Nick Harris
Graphic: Julian Saul

TOMORROW'S SKY GAME - 4PM

Coventry v Everton

Last season: 0-0

COVENTRY MANAGER Gordon Strachan may be forced to field an entirely new centre-back pairing against Everton at Highfield Road tomorrow because of injuries to Gary Breen and Richard Shaw, who both face late fitness tests.

Cruel observers might suggest that this course of action would be no bad thing, but there were signs in the 1-0 loss to Arsenal, then in the 2-1 win at Blackburn last weekend, that Coventry were beginning to find some form. Noel Whelan and Darren Huckerby showed a burgeoning understanding that could help to offset the loss of Dion Dublin to Aston Villa.

Frenchman Jean-Guy Wallemme, whose last game was against Newcastle in mid-September, and Paul Williams are on standby to fill the defensive holes. Williams replaced Breen in the second half at Ewood Park when he limped off with ankle ligament damage. Shaw has ricked his neck.

No such defensive worries for Walter Smith, who will have David Unsworth back for the game at Highfield Road after he missed the midweek Worthington Cup tie defeat against Sunderland with flu. Apart from a blip against Manchester United, defence has not been the problem.

COVENTRY CITY (from): Hedman, Nilsson, Shaw, Breen, Williams, Wallemme, Edworthy, Telfer, McAllister, Clement, Froggatt, Huckerby, Whelan, Boateng, Soltvedt, Brightwell, Boland, Dalsh, Ogrizovic.
EVERTON (from): Myhre, Short, Ball, Watson, Unsworth, Materazzi, Cleland, Unsworth, Dunne, Dacourt, Collins, Hutchison, Oster, Billic, Cadamarteri, Ferguson, Bakayoko, Grant, Simonsen, Milligan.
Injuries: Coventry: None confirmed. **Everton:** None confirmed.
Suspensions: Coventry: None. **Everton:** None.
Referee: G Poll.

Newcastle v Sheff Wed

Last season: 1-1

NEWCASTLE MANAGER Ruud Gullit look certain to be denied the services of his Greek defender Nikos Dabizas for the game with Sheffield Wednesday at St James' Park today.

The Greek football association will make a late final decision on whether Dabizas should be allowed to play for his club before heading off on international duty, but there is a chance that they could be swayed by Fifa's ruling to allow the Republic of Ireland goalkeeper Shay Given to face Wednesday.

Another keeper being giveo a chance is Pavel Srnicek, formerly a Magpies favourite, who should make his debut for his new club following an injury to regular No 1 Kevin Pressman.

Manager Danny Wilson only completed the signing of Srnicek this week – just in time it seems – and the Czech international goes straight into the side as Pressman is likely to be out for two to three weeks with tears in his left thigh muscle. Italian striker Benito Carbone again looks as if he will be out, while defender Des Walker should be fit despite a leg injury.

NEWCASTLE (from): Given, Harper, Griffin, Barton, Charvet, Hughes, Albert, Lee, Batty, Glass, Hamann, Speed, Solano, Shearer, Dalglish, Ketsbaia, Gillespie, Andersson.
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): Srnicek, Atherton, Jonk, Newsome, Walker, Booth, Hyde, Sonetti, Humphreys, Briscoe, Oakes, Hinchcliffe, Sedloski, Emerson, Magilton, Rudi, Alexandersson, Sonner, Stefanovic, Clarke.
Injuries: Newcastle: None confirmed. **Wednesday:** Pressman, Carbone.
Suspensions: Newcastle: Pearce. **Wednesday:** Di Canio
Referee: P Jones.

Southampton v Aston Villa

Last season: 1-2

SOUTHAMPTON WILL be without Mark Hughes – who will serve his second one-match ban of the season – as they attempt to extend their Premiership unbeaten run to five games. Matthew Oakley is likely to replace him after recovering from a virus which had kept him out for a fortnight while captain Jason Dodd is also poised to return at right-back after five weeks out with ankle trouble. Winger Stuart Ripley is hoping to recover from a dead leg while Wayne Bridge has a hamstring problem and midfielder David Howells is struggling with a knee injury. All three will undergo late fitness tests.

Villa will make a check on the fitness of Mark Bosnich before naming a side. Dion Dublin, on the losing side at the Dell as a Coventry player a few weeks ago, returns today a Villan.

SOUTHAMPTON (from): Jones, Dodd, Benali, Monkou, Lundekvam, Palmer, Oakley, Bridge, Ripley, Ostenstad, Le Tissier, Gibbens, Howells, Dryden, Beattie, Williams, Moss.
ASTON VILLA (from): Oakes, Bosnich, Watson, Ehiogu, Southgate, Barry, Wright, Taylor, Draper, Hendrie, Merson, Collymore, Dublin, Draper, Joachim, Grayson, Thompson, Scimeca, Charles, Rachel.
Injuries: Saints: None confirmed. **Villa:** None confirmed
Suspensions: Saints: Hughes. **Villa:** None.
Referee: N Barry.

West Ham v Leicester

Last season: 4-3

WEST HAM go into today's game minus four players who would normally expect to be involved. Defender Neil Ruddock (suspended), Craig Forrest (elbow), Andy Impey (hip) and Stan Lazaridis (groin)are all missing as Harry Redknapp's men take on a Leicester side in a rich vein of form managed by a Martin O' Neill, a man whose side seem to produce better results the more his services are coveted elsewhere. Julian Dicks and Javier Margas could both come into consideration for the Hammers. John Moncur, kept out last week with an ankle problem, and John Hartson, who had a dead leg, are both available.

O'Neill will be without England Under-21 striker Emile Heskey (ankle), a loss that might cause concern, but if the player's less than stunning recent form has been due to his carrying an injury, at least his manager might be pleased to be giving it a chance to recover. Tony Cottee (thigh) and Ian Marshall (hamstring) are doubtful for the match. Stuart Wilson may play up front with Steve Walsh moving forward from his usual central defender role. Theo Zagorakis is away on international duty with Greece but Northern Ireland's Neil Lennon has been given leave to play by Lawrie McMenemy.

WEST HAM (from): Hislop, Sealey, Potts, Dicks, Margas, Ferdinand, Pearce, Keller, Sinclair, Lomas, Moncur, Lampard, Berkovic, Kitson, Wright, Hartson, Breacker, Abou, Hodges, Omoyinmi, Coyne.
LEICESTER (from): Keller, Arphexad, Guppy, Sinclair, Walsh, Elliott, Taggart, Izzet, Lennon, Parker, Savage, Kaamark, Campbell, Ullathorne, Fenton, Wilson, Oakes, Wenlock.
Injuries: West Ham: Forrest, Impey, Lazaridis. **Leicester:** Heskey.
Suspensions: West Ham: Ruddock. **Leicester:** None.
Referee: S. Lodge.

MONDAY NIGHT'S SKY GAME - 8PM

Nottm Forest v Derby

Last season: No fixture

NOTTINGHAM FOREST are likely to recall striking striker Pierre van Hooijdonk to help them take on the old eoemy on Monday. Van Hooijdonk was relegated to the bench for Wednesday's Worthington Cup defeat against Manchester United but looks likely to return at the expense of either Dougie Freedman or Marlon Harewood. History favours the home side today. They have oot lost a League game to the Rams at the City Ground since 1971.

Derby will go into the East Midlands derby without captain Igor Stimac. The Croatian defender missed last Saturday's 2-1 win at Liverpool with an ankle injury and is now suspended for the City Ground match. Midfielder Lee Carsley is still out with a knee injury and defender Rory Delap is with the Republic of Ireland squad in Yugoslavia. German wing-back Stefan Schnoor is available after serving a one-match ban and striker Dean Sturridge could also be back along with centre-half Spencer Prior, who has recovered from a knee injury.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): Beasant, Louis-Jean, Rogers, Chettle, Armstrong, Stone, Gemmill, Bart-Williams, Harewood, Freedman, van Hooijdonk, Lyttle, Bonalair, Darcheville, Edwards, Crossley.
DERBY (from): Hoult, Laursen, Carbonari, Elliott, Kozluk, Powell, Boateng, Dorigo, Harper, Wanchope, Sturridge, Schnoor, Burton, Bolano, Prior, Poom, Bridge-Wilkinson
Injuries: Forest: None confirmed. **Derby:** Stimac, Carsley
Suspensions: Forest: None. **Derby:** None.
Referee: G. Barber.

SPORT

JOHNSON'S WORLD CUP MISSION P23 ● COTTEE'S LATEST GOAL P30

Hoddle gives youth a chance

FOOTBALL

BY STEVE TONGUE

GLENN HODDLE has called on the young ones, while leaving Manchester United's Andy Cole in the shadows for England's friendly international at home to the Czech Republic next Wednesday.

Young dreams, as Sir Cliff used to sing, should be dreamed together, so Emile Heskey, of Leicester, Aston Villa's Lee Hendrie and the Ipswich goalkeeper Richard Wright are promoted *en bloc* from a successful under-21 squad. With Michael Owen hamstrung, his partner Robbie Fowler is preferred to Cole, and some older hands – Paul Ince, Tony Adams and Paul Gascoigne – are left to rest or recuperate.

Others in the squad may not get as far as Wembley. Unlike this season's previous international weeks, there is a full Premiership programme to be negotiated first. Arsenal and Manchester United, with important Champions' League matches the following week, will not be expected to give England the benefit of any doubt over their players' fitness this time; nor will they be dismayed by the absence of Ray Parlour and Phil Neville from the list.

"You can plan your team and it can fall apart," said Hoddle, who regards this game as critical preparation for the Euro 2000 qualifiers against Poland and Sweden. "Mentally, we have a stand-by squad." He would do well to keep his mobile phone switched on this afternoon.

Heskey is already out of Leicester's game today after being taken off at half-time during the midweek Worthington Cup tie against Leeds with an ankle injury, but has as much incentive as anyone to turn up if he possibly can. Although not a prolific scorer he has discomforted defenders at under-21 level with his power and pace, which were not the only attributes Hoddle picked out in discussing his qualities yesterday.

"He's not the finished article, but he's learnt a lot over the last 12 months and there are subtleties in his game now, like knowing how to shift defenders," said the coach.

Hendrie, only brought into the Villa side late last season, has benefited from standing out whenever Hoddle has watched him: "There's a lot of talent there, but this lad has the temperament as well."

Ipswich's Wright is the one Nationwide League player in the squad, though his club-mate, Kieron Dyer, also received an honourable mention yesterday, as did Frank Lampard. The West Ham midfielder narrowly lost out to Hendrie this time.

There was a time when the gap between under-21 level and the senior side was considered too formidable to be bridged in one leap by all but the most accomplished players. In offering this fast-track promotion, Hoddle is making a significant point, which be expanded on: "In many countries that'a been happening for five or six years and they're ahead of us. Now the FA have allowed a full-time under-21 manager [Peter Taylor], which is a step forward."

There can be no complaints about the performances of Owen and Rio Ferdinand, the two previous graduates. Ferdinand is likely to start again on Wednesday. "There won't be seven or eight just being tried out," said Hoddle. "And if we throw three youngsters in at the same time, we could fall on our face."

There are older fringe players to be considered, such as Nigel Martyn, Martin Keown, Nicky Butt, Paul Merson, Dion Dublin and Fowler, who returns for the first time since being injured before the World Cup, despite his own modest form and Cole's recent rush of goals.

It was eight years ago that a game against Czechoslovakia, as they then were, offered Paul Gascoigne the stage to convince Bobby Robson that he was worth a place in the World Cup finals. Having failed to persuade Hoddle of the same thing last summer, Gascoigne was yesterday given hope that his day might yet dawn again. "I'm pleased he's addressing his problems," Hoddle said. "He needs more time for that. Any coach would want him if he was back to his best. What we need to know is if he can get back."

ENGLAND SQUAD: Goalkeepers: **Seaman** (Arsenal), **Martyn** (Leeds United), **R Wright** (Ipswich); Defenders: **Keown** (Arsenal), **Hinchcliffe** (Sheffield Wednesday), **Le Saux** (Chelsea), **G Neville** (Manchester United), **Ferdinand** (West Ham); Midfielders: **Butt** (Manchester United), **Hendrie** (Aston Villa), **Batty** (Newcastle United), **Anderton** (Tottenham), **Beckham** (Manchester United), **Merson** (Aston Villa), **Redknapp** (Liverpool), **Scholes** (Manchester United); Strikers: **Shearer** (Newcastle United), **I Wright** (West Ham), **Fowler** (Liverpool), **Dublin** (Aston Villa), **Heskey** (Leicester City).

The Welsh captain, Robert Howley, practises his kicking at Wembley yesterday as his team dicuss tactics for today's Test against South Africa *Allsport*

Houllier ready for Real battle

BY KIERAN DALEY

GERARD HOULLIER has accepted the reality that he could lose Steve McManaman but the Liverpool manager will not let him go without a fight.

A new contract for McManaman, who misses today's game with Leeds because of an Achilles injury, will be one of the first tasks for the Frenchman following Roy Evans' emotional departure on Thursday. But with Real Madrid having declared their interest after Liverpool's Uefa Cup success against Valencia earlier this month, time is against Houllier.

The Real Madrid president, Lorenzo Sanz, has claimed that progress has been made in negotiations. "We've moved closer to the point where we can think about a satisfactory resolution to the matter," he said.

McManaman cannot officially talk to clubs until 1 January but his advisors can discuss his future with any interested parties. And Houllier knows there is little Liverpool can do to stop McManaman quitting if he wants to. A four-year contract, with a one-year option, is believed to be on the table, and Houllier said: "Steve has never hidden the fact that he wanted at one stage of his career to go abroad, and if he finds the opportunity this season, I will feel sorry for the club and I will regret it because I would like him to stay. But I am not resigned to him going and we will continue the battle to keep him at the club."

Houllier and his new assistant, Phil Thompson, will be missing several top players for their first game together against Leeds, including Michael Owen, who has a hamstring problem but could be back for next weekend's trip to Aston Villa. Steve Staunton and Phil Babb are available after Fifa ruled that the Republic of Ireland players did not have to miss the game ahead of Wednesday's international against Yugoslavia, but Jason McAteer is suspended.

Tim Flowers will be out of Blackburn's goal for the next two months after a freak training ground accident and may need an operation to repair tendons in his shoulder.

The goalkeepers Alan Kelly and Ian Bennett are about to do a £3m-rated swap between Sheffield United and Birmingham City. The Republic of Ireland's Kelly met Trevor Francis yesterday to discuss terms about the transfer and is expected to join over the weekend.

Wales must stifle Springboks' zeal

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

HARD-BITTEN New Zealand rugby coaches like Graham Henry are not noted for their squeamishness; they eat supper during the *Psycho* shower scene and consider *The Exorcist* to be a better religious sitcom than *Father Ted*. But there is one piece of film footage that Henry flatly refuses to watch. It is of a massacre so depressingly bloody that it makes the first 25 minutes of *Saving Private Ryan* look like family entertainment.

We speak, of course, of the video of last June's one-off international between South Africa and Wales in Pretoria, during which the Springboks amassed an unprecedented 96 points and missed hitting the three-figure mark only because of a late outbreak of butterfingered incompetence.

"Of course I haven't seen it," said Wales' new coach this week. "I don't think the events of that day are a good thing to bring up. The whole business is a complete negative. What conceivable help would watching that tape be to me in my preparations for today's game?"

Well, considering today's game is against those selfsame South Africans – 14 of the Springboks who set the Loftus Versfeld annihilation in motion are on duty at Wembley this afternoon – it would surely have thrown up the odd pointer as to how the world champions might best be checked, if not subdued. "We don't need a piece of film to tell us that a 96-13 defeat is totally unacceptable," snarled the former Auckland and New Zealand A coach as he readied himself for a daunting first Test.

His comment begged another question: namely, the precise measure of defeat that *would* be acceptable, given that Welsh rugby has reached such a low ebb that a variety of shellfish would now be clearly visible on the once hallowed turf of Cardiff Arms Park had the construction gangs not dug it up to start work on the Millennium Stadium. Henry was in no mood to name a figure but if Rob Howley's team were offered a 15-point losing margin before kick-off, they would almost certainly throw a party.

South Africa who open their bid for a first Grand Slam of Britain and Ireland in almost 40 years on the back of a Tri-Nations clean sweep, are currently the best in the business. "They're a totally different proposition from the side that faced the Lions last year – they're well selected for a start – and I would also say that they have a distinct edge over the team that won the World Cup in 1995," Henry said. "Their defence is something else; in Henry Honiball they have a unique outside-half, someone who plays more physically than any stand-off in history."

For all the rumbustious talents of the Quinnell brothers and Martyn Williams' speed to the breakdown, the Welsh do not possess the weight of forward muscle required to force scores through sustained bouts of physical intensity. Sadly, Allan Bateman's absence from the outside centre position and Henry's apparent lack of interest in the flashing genius of Arwel Thomas also deprives the Dragons of their most obvious attacking lock-pickers. Neil Jenkins will have to deliver a faultless 80 minutes with the boot, just to keep his countrymen at the races.

Pontypridd's favourite son has kicked South Africa into an early grave before, of course, during last year's Lions tour. Since then, though, one or two other elements of his rugby portfolio have failed to survive serious examination, most notably when Thomas Castaignède, his French opposite number, left Jenkins standing in Wales' last appearance at Wembley in April.

Given that only three Welshmen – Dafydd James, Mark Taylor and Colin Charvis – survive from last summer's underbaked and over-exposed Test line-up, the Welsh should avoid a painful dose of Loftus Revisited today. But these Boks have a missionary zeal about them. A world record run of Test victories is within their grasp, as well as a precious Slam. It will be astonishing if those possibilities are not still alive when the crowds disappear back down Wembley Way this evening.

Henry's task, page 22

WALES v SOUTH AFRICA

at Wembley Stadium

S Howarth	Sale	15	P Montgomery ..... W Province
G Thomas	Cardiff	14	S Terblanche ..... Boland
M Taylor	Swansea	13	A Snyman ..... Blue Bulls
S Gibbs	Swansea	12	F Smith ..... Blue Bulls
D James	Pontypridd	11	P Rossouw ..... W Province
N Jenkins	Pontypridd	10	H Honiball ..... Natal
R Howley	Cardiff, capt	9	J van de Westhuizen .. Blue Bulls
A Lewis	Cardiff	1	R Kempson ..... Natal
J Humphreys	Cardiff	2	J Dalton ..... Golden Lions
C Anthony	Swansea	3	A Garvey ..... Natal
C Quinnell	Richmond	4	K Otto ..... Blue Bulls
C Wyatt	Llanelli	5	M Andrews ..... Natal
C Charvis	Swansea	6	J Erasmus ..... Free State
M Williams	Pontypridd	7	A Venter ..... Free State
S Quinnell	Llanelli	8	G Teichmann ..... Natal, capt

Replacements: 16 M Rayer (Cardiff), 17 N Boobyer (Llanelli), 18 D Llewellyn (Ebbw Vale), 19 M Voyle (Llanelli), 20 D Morris (Swansea), 21 B Evans (Swansea), 22 B Williams (Richmond).

Replacements: 16 G Du Toit (Griqualand West), 17 B Van Straaten (MTN Falcons), 18 W Swanepoel (Free State), 19 B Skinstad (Western Province), 20 S Boome (Western Province), 21 O Le Roux (Natal), 22 N Drotske (Free State).

Referee: S Dickinson (Australia) **Kick-off:** 3.00pm (BBC1, 2.15)

THE SATURDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3768. Saturday 14 November **By Mass**

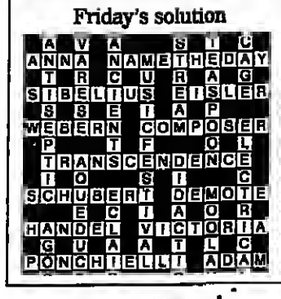
ACROSS

7 Thick English bread (4)
8 Fruit, kind confined to East (10)
10 Dross yielded by old US mining location (8)
11 People's institution in the States (6)
12 Repeat gossip, going around with nonsense (6)
13 Short bolt with paltry key (8)
15 Attention perhaps required when making arrangement with bankers (8, 5)
18 Blues, start of rage among those changing suits (8)
20 Tempts with breakfast announcement (4, 2)
22 Release bear (6)
24 Peg-leg? Just the opposite (3, 5)
25 Place for odd spell with con State put inside? (6, 4)
26 Reported merit in high-flyer (4)

DOWN

1 Timber destroyer imbued with head for incendiarism? (4-6)
2 Bid affecting Hearts? (6)
3 Approached with account and quoted charge (8)
4 Heard man making wheel-rim (6)
5 Scored? I started improvising (8)
6 Indian of Brahmin caste (4)
9 Extremely limited point of view? (3, 2, 4, 4)
14 Restricted intelligence? (6, 4)
16 A Latin maxim conveying generosity (8)
17 Surfeit of liver, wasted, left (8)
19 Number cramped by English dwelling's dimensions (6)
21 Meet contract (6)
23 Textile instrument's cut woollen garment (4)

Friday's solution



Last Saturday's solution

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P. O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: P Wood, Tredegar; G Stubbs, Beeston; L Atkinson, Shipley; S Walkeley, Louth; S deGrassi, Bournemouth.

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WEEKEND REVIEW

Let them eat caviare

Far from Moscow and starved of resources and energy, the people of Kamchatka Peninsula are suffering a total collapse of social and economic life *Sarah Leen/Matrix*

Abandoned by Moscow, Oktyabrski is starved of everything except the local caviare. The nuclear missiles have gone, taking most of the people and nearly all of the jobs. Welcome to Russia's forgotten far east, where only vodka can obliterate the cold and despair

BY PHIL REEVES

Mid-afternoon yesterday, with a fresh squall whistling in from the sea, five dozen people filed in to the broken-down hut that passes for Oktyabrski's village theatre, dusted the snow off their boots, and settled down for the big – and the only – event of the day.

They had nothing else to do. The power was off, as usual. The heating at home was minimal, even though the temperature was well below zero outside. The cinema and restaurant shut down long ago. Almost no one has a job. Why not while away an hour or two with the neighbours, even if it means the less than glamorous prospect of watching a children's potato-peeling race?

Times are hard in much of Russia, but few places are as forlorn and abandoned as this community, a village on the western edge of the Kamchatka peninsula. It is, as it is beginning to discover to its cost, on the very rim of the vast Russian Federation, on a giant finger of land that points southward into the Pacific and towards Japan.

Eight years ago the entire region, the front line of the Soviet Union's eastern nuclear defences and a missile test-bed, was closed to foreigners, and even Soviet citizens had to have special permission to visit. But Moscow's grip has grown feeble, and it is now barely felt here, at the far end of a largely defunct supply line. Even the regional capital, Petropavlovsk, is a distant entity, separated by a four-hour car journey along what, in winter, is not a road but a band of ice running across a wild, refrigerated landscape of birch forests and snow-covered volcanoes.

"No one cares about us any more," said Sergei Kazanov, 45, a former fisherman. There is nothing left to do. We used to call the winter the drinking season. But now it never ends."

He is not kidding. Local doctors say that in the last fortnight alone, five people – including two women – have drunk themselves to death. Their village, once a thriving Soviet fishing community and a source of Moscow's red caviare supply, is fading away. Seven years ago, there were 7,000 inhabitants. Two-thirds have since left, migrating either elsewhere on the peninsula or to what they call Russia's "mainland" in search of work and better conditions.

The canning factory, which once employed 1,000 people and rattled away round the clock, has shut. The October Revolution fishing collective, which used to run 30 boats, has also closed after a failed attempt at privatisation. There is no bank, no launderette, no sports complex, no church, no pool and no steam baths. Half the village school's pupils have left. The mud streets, choked with snow and rubbish, have not been cleared for a month, because the local authority cannot afford the petrol for its refuse vehicle.

Electricity is switched off for 21 hours a day because no one has paid the power stations. The heating system is on low power, despite the swirling snow, knee-high drifts and cutting sea winds. The few peeling, putrid, five-storey apartment buildings are covered with blisters of damp and rust. The rest – a botcher's paradise of wooden barracks, builders' lots, rusting storage depots, iron garages and twisted metal junk – is gently falling apart.

The place is turning into driftwood and flotsam, the wreckage of a community that is already totally washed up, and will eventually be swallowed up altogether by the sea which laps at its edge.

As this vast country lumbers painfully towards winter, anxiety has set in within the international community about the capacity of places such as Oktyabrski – and thousands of others scattered across Russia's 11 time zones – to survive the next few months. No one seems certain that they will battle through, just as they have so often over past decades, weathering terror, war and the destruction of the entire social system. Opinions differ. The UN's food and agriculture organisation has predicted "spot food shortages" but not widespread ones. The international federations of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have launched an appeal of $15m, saying that "a silent disaster" is afoot. The US has extended a $600m loan to Russia to buy American food, and has promised to send humanitarian aid, including 1.5 million tons of wheat. There have been airy assurances from Moscow that there is no cause for panic, despite a dismal grain and potato harvest this year.

Western security sources, cited by *The Times* this week, fear that Russia's food supplies could run out within weeks, bringing the threat of unrest and thousands of westbound refugees. The reality is likely to be less lurid. It will not pay to be poor and weak, or elderly and ill, or very young, in Russia in the next six months. But for the great majority of the 147-million-strong population, the problem is less likely to be about famine and riots than abject misery, chronic illness and the side-effects of an economic decline worse than the American great depression, such as alcohol and suicide.

The dwindling few who have stayed behind in Oktyabrski are typical of many. Their problem is not so much a lack of food as a gross imbalance in their access to it. Dairy products, including milk, and fresh fruit are in short supply. What little there is is too expensive for many to afford – especially after price hikes following this year's rouble crash. In the tiny snowbound outdoor market, apples cost 40 roubles – £1.60 – a kilo, the equivalent of a day's pay for the handful of people who still have work. The able-bodied have filled their garages and basements with home-grown summer produce from their allotments, mostly potatoes, and pickled tomatoes and cucumbers. But there is precious little fresh produce.

"We live on rice and soup," said Ludmilla Danyushkina, 35, as she stood surrounded by a few meagre products in the elders' hut that passes for a shop. She worries about the effect on her 12-year-old son, whom she is trying to bring up single-handedly on a monthly wage of £44. "We have very few vegetables. Every time I make soup there seems to be less to put in it."

There is, however, plenty of fish. In fact, in one of the more alarming examples of the breakdown of supply lines, the abundance is such that there are one-metre-high piles of rotting fish scattered around the village. Once the caviare has been gouged out of the carcasses, no one bothers to preserve the rest, leaving it to the scores of stray dogs, seagulls and the occasional passing bear.

Caviare is plentiful. "We eat about a bucket a year," said Patyana Gerasimenko, the head doctor in the local hospital. "In fact, we get completely sick of it. There comes a time when you just can't eat it any more."

But you cannot live on caviare alone. The doctor says the effect of poor diet and dismal

Continued on page 2

INSIDE

TOMORROW IN

THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

REVIEW

More exciting than the film: the truth about ants

CULTURE

What's it like to be in a flop? The story of *Antony and Cleopatra*

REAL LIFE

Desire: it's in your genes, not in your jeans: Simon Andreae explains

PLUS

Captain Moonlight: the *New Statesman* says he's 'brilliantly anarchic'– decide for yourself

How singing can help you survive

David Thomson: why I hate children's films

Hibernating Houses No 6: Norman, the gardener at Blickling Hall, Norfolk since he was demobbed after the Last War, tidies up for winter *Brian Harris*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Climatic hot air

Sir: Your report "World's coral reefs are dying in the heat" (13 November) supports worrying evidence from WWF's projects overseas that the world's coral is dying out. The finding that this is mostly as a result of rising sea temperatures is yet another example of the need for the world's governments to take immediate action to tackle climate change.

As the Buenos Aires negotiations come to an end this evidence reinforces the need for countries around the world to stop stalling, stop looking for ways to buy themselves out of the problem and start taking action to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide. This can only happen if limits are placed on the use of all "flexible mechanisms" such as emissions trading, which act as a loophole to allow countries to avoid making reductions at home. Only when these limits are in place will the hot air have been squeezed out of the argument.
RUSSELL MARSH
Energy and Climate Change Officer
WWF-UK
Godalming, Surrey

Sir: Wind energy generation is not a technology that can ever have an impact on climate ("Windmill power set for major boom," 12 November).

For the last 25 years governments around the world have pumped hundreds of millions of dollars in tax incentives and subsidy into wind "farms" and about 30,000 wind turbines have been built. Their installed capacity is 8,000MW, but because of the intermittency of wind-dependent generation their combined average output is about 2,000MW – the equivalent of just one medium-sized gas power station. The early players in the field like California have more or less abandoned the idea of wind power.

Why, therefore, does Michael Meacher, the Environment minister, have such an attachment to wind turbines? Could it be that to do something really effective to tackle the emission of so-called greenhouse gases – draconian restrictions on motor traffic and heavy pollution taxation – would be economically and politically costly? Turbines, however, being 300ft high, make a highly visible "green" gesture while opinion polls show that, except in the communities where they are built, they have reasonably wide public support.
ROBERT WOODWARD
Country Guardian
Twickenham, London TW1

Sir: I found the timing of your report about renewable-energy ironic. On the day it was published I was visiting Border Wind's Blyth Harbour wind-farm in the North-east to demonstrate the Government's support and to see this innovative technology first-hand.

The Department of Trade and Industry's new and renewable energy programme already supports a wide range of projects related to wind energy aimed at both onshore and offshore development. Since the programme started, over £70m has been invested in wind energy.

On coming into office this government inherited a figure of 2 per cent renewable contribution to UK electricity supplies. That figure will now rise to 5 per cent by about 2003. I want to see that figure rise to 10 per cent by 2010 and am determined we will get there.

On support for offshore wind developments, in September this year I took a major step towards generating electricity from offshore wind by launching a consultation document on greater support. We are monitoring the development of the offshore wind project at Blyth and assessing its commercial opportunities.

We have already taken more action to deliver renewable energy in our first 18 months than many even imagined possible.
JOHN BATTLE MP
Minister of State
Department of Trade and Industry
London SW1

Stop hitting Iraq

Sir: The bankruptcy of Anglo-American policy towards Iraq is every day more apparent. It is isolating Britain from its European partners and the Arab world. It is punishing the entire Iraqi people for Saddam Hussein, without any realistic prospect of bringing him down.

The present government did not devise this brutal and stupid policy, but seems incapable of revising or re-examining it. It is in essence an American, not a British, policy, making cruise missiles a substitute for intelligent diplomacy. It sits oddly, with the idea of an "ethical foreign policy". Try telling that to the people of Baghdad.

Britain has long links with Iraq, both cultural and political. Our priority should be to dismantle the US concept of "pariah states" (Israel also has atomic and chemical weapons, but is apparently not a pariah). A normal and open relationship with Iraq would benefit Britain, the Iraqis and the whole region. It would also be far more likely to undermine Saddam Hussein.
Professor GERALD MOORE
Udine, Italy

It was worth it

Sir: "Was it worth it?", asks Harold Judd, a veteran of the First World War (report, 11 November). Of course, Mr Judd is entitled, as so few others are, to ask this question, but I hope that he knows in his heart of hearts that it was worth it.

Our appreciation of the gift given to us by his generation (and those who fought in the Second World War) is not diminished by our ignorance of the price that was paid for it. I am able to live and raise my children in peace and freedom, with only small worries, thanks to these men. And I shall endeavour to ensure that my children know enough about what has gone before to understand how lucky they are.

And to those who wonder why we now spend our time reading gossip about politicians and royalty (letter, 11 November), I would only say: We do so because we can. Distasteful as it often is, it is infinitely preferable to lists of friends and family killed or missing in action.
KIMI GOVIER
Hintlesham, Suffolk

Sir: The veteran (report, 11 November) asks of the First World War: "Was it worth it?" The same question could be asked of the second.

Both wars were fought against a Germany wishing to control Europe.

How ironic that our "success" in the wars has brought about a situation, through the European Union, when we are dominated by the Germans.

The veteran and many others might well ask: "Was it worth it?"
J K L HUGHES
Folkestone

Out and visible

Sir: Of course a public figure's homosexuality is relevant – though not to his or her suitability for a particular job. To pretend irrelevance is to ignore the vital role of visibility in the continuing fight to promote tolerance. I write not to defend outing but simply to say that until gay men and lesbians no longer feel they have to hide their sexuality we desperately need out gay public figures.

It is in this respect that the current arguments for privacy concern me. What exactly are we fighting to keep private? What a person actually does in bed should, indeed, be private. But arguing that homosexuality itself should be a private affair is so horribly apologetic – it not only acknowledges but bows down to prejudice and allows the bigoted not to confront their intolerance. And it gives us permission as lesbians and gay men to continue the hypocrisy – staying in the closet to protect our family's intolerance, for example, while condemning society's.

Gay Pride is not about being proud in any arrogant sense – we've done nothing special, after all. But it is about a refusal to accept the converse of pride, which is shame. Please don't continue to promote the idea, however well-intentioned, that it is right and proper to want to hide one's homosexuality. Special circumstances apart, such as the complex issue of homosexuality within a marriage, if you are not ashamed, what other possible reason could there be for keeping it private?
ANTONY SMITH
London SE1

Sir: David Aaronovitch (Comment, 10 November) was right to draw a link between the "Nick Brown affair" and the suicide of a 15-year-old boy following anti-gay bullying. But the Government should be taking some of the flak which is being directed at *The Sun*. The Government is in a position to take a lead on this issue, but by its recent announcements that gay couples are not suitable to be adoptive parents and that the repeal of Section 28 is to be delayed, it has instead made clear its view that lesbian and gay relationships are not equal in value to heterosexual ones and has thereby contributed to a climate in which bigoted attitudes can continue to flourish and in which tragedies will continue to occur.
ISABEL HANDOVSKY
London N4

Home grown?

Sir: While at first sight, the prediction that sales of organic food will triple in the next four years is good news (report, 7 November), this increase will come almost entirely from imports of organic produce. Currently, 80 per cent of organic food sold here is imported, with simple items such as carrots and onions coming from far away, even though we are capable of growing these ourselves. It is sometimes hard to convince a consumer that an imported organic cauliflower at twice the price is better than a chemically produced one grown only miles away.

The amount of land under organic production in this country has remained static at less than 1 per cent for more than a decade. While there may be some significant increase in the near future, it will not in any way be sufficient to offset the huge demand to import even more organic produce. As a national pressure group, the Soil Association has repeatedly failed to come up with any solution. It is time we took this issue, including the setting of organic standards, away from such voluntary groups and determine as a nation how we are to meet these demands for organic produce.
MARK FISHER
Shipley, West Yorkshire

IN BRIEF

Sir: Apropos the actor Robert Lindsay's lament ("Lindsay accuses critics of vile plot", 13 November), when a play succeeds it is generally the director who is fêted; failure often leaves the actor carrying the can. It is, however, unjust and unreasonable that Mr Lindsay should berate his critics for his real quarrel is with his director. Our major national theatres are currently experiencing a serious dearth of competent direction; I walk out of more Royal Shakespeare Company productions than I survive. Mr Lindsay might be best advised to do likewise.
MALCOLM ROSS
Dartington, Devon

Sir: Contrary to Mohamed al-Fayed's assertions (You Ask the Questions, 11 November), Macmillan is delighted with the remarkable sales performance of Tom Bower's unauthorised biography – despite its non-appearance on Harrods' shelves.
MARI EVANS
Editor
Macmillan General Books
London SW1

Sir: Chris Harry's interesting letter (12 November) about underpants superseding shirt-tails poses a possible solution to the problem of concern about Western European loss of sperm count. Down with underpants!
HUW JAMES
Swansea

Oktyabrski: life on the edge of oblivion

Continued from page 1

conditions can be seen on children who are suffering an increase in skin, stomach and respiratory conditions. The range of available medicines is extremely narrow, and likely to get narrower as supplies of imported pharmaceuticals dry up following this summer's collapse of the rouble and much of the banking system.

It was not always thus. Under the Soviet Union, the Oktyabrski workforce was well paid by national standards because they got higher, "northern" pay to compensate for the tough conditions. Pyotr Bolichyov, 41, a local official, can remember when each year he could afford to go on holiday to the Black Sea, sometimes for several months at a time. Officially, he's the head of the village's communal services department, in charge of heating and street cleaning. But, as his wages are two years late, and have been corroded by devaluation and inflation, he has turned to other work, providing another example of the survival skills on which many Russians now rely. He has become a poacher. This summer he made 43,000 roubles from red caviare sales. But even that source of sustenance is uncertain. The salmon do not come every year. When the winter is over he says he, too, will be moving out in search of work.

So what are the authorities doing about it all? Today a government commission of 21 officials will meet in Kamchatka to discuss the problems of the peninsula's remote communities. There are plans for several fishing villages in the north to be evacuated altogether. But is hard to see any quick solutions, given the economic crisis gripping Moscow and the Primakov government's penchant for making plans but doing little.

Remote communities are suffering the most *SIPA*

Whether the international aid programmes find their targets is an open question. Past efforts, notably a US humanitarian project in 1992, led to widespread corruption in Russia. Having seen too many promises broken before, none of those Russians in real need will be holding their breath.

Despite this there is a general consensus that the bulk of the Russian people will, once again, accept their fate without resorting to violent protest. "There won't be any revolutions," said Kamchatka's First Deputy Governor, Boris Sinchenko. No matter that he openly concedes that, after striking a deal which ended three weeks of electricity cuts in the regional capital, he can give no guarantee there will be no more power problems. "There is already too much blood in our history," he said wearily. He is probably right. The tragedy is that, seven years after the end of Soviet communism, Russia should be discussing the issue at all.

APOLOGY

Because of a production error, there were a number of serious mistakes in the interview with David Yelland that appeared on the front page of the Friday Review. Our apologies.

THE INDEPENDENT

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The prince and the pauper, still placed at birth

THE BIRTHDAY of the heir to the throne is not a very significant day in the life of the nation. But it does prompt a thought about the nature of élites and the balance between inheritance and merit in New Britain, the Young Country, to use Tony Blair's phrase. For it is still the case that a child born into a broken home on a sink estate is as predestined to live a life of deprivation as Prince Charles, on his birth in 1948, was destined to a life of privilege.

Not that Charles has had a good time exactly, as David Aaronovitch pointed out in these pages earlier this week. He has been so burdened with a sense of duty, a pretension to intellectual seriousness and a series of impossible requirements of his sex life that he has been as securely imprisoned in misery as any member of the underclass. When it comes to the allocation of unhappiness the Royal Family is an outstanding special case among the materially privileged classes, but that does nothing to diminish the force of the argument that our life chances are overwhelmingly determined by the social circumstances of our birth.

Any parent can see how early the separation into advantaged and disadvantaged begins. The class bias in breast-feeding, in the figures for parents who "smack" children under the age of 18 months, in the extent to which reading at home is at least as normal as watching television, and in the persistent inequality of health that Sir Donald Acheson has documented – these and many other biases mean that a system of educational apartheid is already well established by the time children turn up for their nursery classes at the age of four.

There is some evidence that social mobility has increased – albeit at a glacial pace – during this century, in that many people born to working-class parents now find themselves in middle-class jobs. Indeed, the last Conservative government put some effort into trying to soften the impact of statistics showing a growing disparity of incomes, by "proving" that people moved up and down the income scales more easily than in the past. Unfortunately, the studies it commissioned made the opposite case, finding that the individuals in the bottom tenth of the income distribution at any one time might have moved up some years later, but rarely out of the bottom third.

At the top end of the scale, various professions are no longer closed shops of the privately educated, and the story of rising to the top from humble origins is an increasingly common one. John Major's journey from Brixton to Downing Street did serve as some kind of hopeful symbol. British businesses are increasingly run by people who have risen on merit (almost all men, however). Stars in sport and pop music are handsomely rewarded regardless of their background.

There are signs, then, that the barriers of class, sex and race are eroding, but far too slowly. While British politicians have spouted the language of "meritocracy" at least since Harold Wilson, they have shown little understanding of the concept.

When Michael Young invented the word in 1958, it had a negative meaning. The creative genius, who helped write Labour's 1945 manifesto and founded the Consumers Association, used it in his satire on British society. It was an attack on selection in schools and the 11-plus, in particular. Simply rewarding "ability", the egalitarian Young argued, would create an embittered underclass of the less able.

It was a curiously pessimistic vision for someone on the left and contrasts sharply with the shiny optimism of Tony Blair, who declares that, once the shackles of Old Britain are lifted, we will all "realise our true potential", with the implication that such an outcome would somehow iron out all the awkward inequalities of academic, artistic and athletic ability and earning power. However Michael, now Lord, Young made an important point, which is that a true meritocracy is not egalitarian. Indeed it would be élitist, and a good thing too. Elites, provided they are not closed castes of inherited privilege, are necessary for the functioning of a fair and efficient society.

But Young was right about one thing, and that is the centrality of education. His argument against the 11-plus carried the day, but we ended up with an embittered underclass anyway, because the real divisions in education were not tackled, in particular the most damaging divide between private and state schools. This month's most telling statistic of social division was that state school pupils achieve higher degrees at Oxford and Cambridge than their counterparts from private schools. This is proof that money can still buy an advantage in winning places at our élite universities.

Modern meritocrats, however, must accept that rewards will be unequal, while striving all the time to make them fair. In this we should be guided by "the veil of ignorance", the great idea of the liberal philosopher John Rawls. A society is fair, he argued, if it is so organised that we would accept it without knowing in advance what our place in it will be – in other words, if it is so organised that we would accept with equanimity the prospect of being born either on a council estate or in Windsor Castle.

It is one of Prince Charles's strengths that he has devoted much of his effort in public service to attempting to tackle precisely the problems of social exclusion experienced by those of less fortunate birth. We wish him a happy and inclusive birthday.

You can make a difference

BY YESTERDAY, *Independent* readers had raised £150,000 for disaster relief in Central America, devastated by Hurricane Mitch.

After this week's rather pointless spat about whether or not writing off debts owed by the governments of Honduras and Nicaragua was "relevant" to the immediate needs of the homeless, hungry and ill, it is gratifying to see private citizens responding so generously. Politicians should attend to the long-term causes of world poverty, and mobilise some taxpayers' money in crises; but in an emergency like this one, a real contribution can be made by individuals.

Keep the cheques coming in to the Disaster Appeal (see page 18, front section), and make a difference on the still sodden ground.

Fear and self-loathing: in other words, that difficult first novel

FERGAL KEANE

I look in the mirror and reflect on what, in parts of Ireland, might be called a face 'like a pig's arse'

NOT THAT you asked or are even remotely interested, but it has been a wretched week.

Home from foreign travels, I'd been planning a soft landing on the planet domestica. But trouble is stirring. The carpenter has entered his sixth week in the kitchen (small terraced Victorian house) and announced that he needs more time and more money. I am weak and incompetent in these situations and so prepare to fork out. Six weeks! I mean to be stern, but what's the point? Friends assure me that it will take as long as it takes, whatever that means.

Then there has been the unremitting torment of work. More of it than I have had for a very long time. Television, radio, newspapers, projects long postponed now biting at my heels. Here there is ample scope for self-hatred. Much of it could have been done before now.

If only I had timetabled properly. If only I were neat and practical, drew up lists and kept to rigorous schedules. I remember my wounded pride when a newspaper described me as somebody of "legendary personal dishevelment". Just now I feel the writer was being rather generous. It has been a week when the hollow phrase "should have done, should have done" has followed on my heels from very early morning to late night. There have been numerous deadlines of varying degrees of hysterical urgency. The phones ring with frantic messages as the year totters to a close and every promise made in the last 12 months comes rolling home.

I looked in the mirror last night and reflected on a countenance of unremitting stupidity: what might, in the remoter parts of Ireland, be called a face "like a pig's arse". "You big ejit," I said. "Why do you take on so much?"

The face could not answer me, and I crept to bed muttering curses against myself. But the greatest injunction bearing down on me is not my work for the BBC or my column for this organ. It is that most terrifying of all propositions – the first novel. Quite a few seasons have passed since I first raised the idea with my literary agent, a woman of great skill and legendary toughness. She was excited by the prospect and encouraged me to get cracking. However, like all those who live by the immediate deadline, I was easily distracted. A crisis in Africa, a drama in Asia, another agony in Ireland. All had prior claim on my attentions.

Sometimes in faraway hotel rooms I would sit down with my laptop and attempt to get started. But my mind was invariably far away, too tired or tipsy or preoccupied with the day's events. Time raced on. My agent dropped a gentle reminder here and there, but she is not the kind of woman to put the pressure on until she really needs to.

In the middle of my avoidance I met a friend for a drink and he asked me how the novel was going. "Ah it's grand," I said feebly. The truth was that work had ground to a standstill. He smiled generously and proceeded to tell me the story of the two aspirant writers meeting in a Dublin pub. One of them announces tentatively: "I'm writing a novel." His colleague adopts a wary expression and replies: "Neither am I." My friend allowed the message to sink in and smiled again, this time without generosity. "Get your skates on Keane," he growled.

It should not have been such a terrifying prospect. I had already produced three works of non-fiction. All had been well received, and one had gone to the top of the best-seller lists. "Be confident, get organised," I told myself. If I was honest I would have admitted to a large measure of fear. Fear of not being good enough, of not having what it takes; fear of being savaged by the critics; most of all the fear of failure.

I've had plenty of praise and also some criticism for my broadcasting work. The latter you take as part of the territory. If you think you can live by praise alone, get out of the business. The really good critics, even those who are occasionally cruel, can help to keep us honest. I believe in the adage "never complain, never explain". But a novel – now that is a higher level of risk altogether, one that involves a much greater degree of self-investment and exposure.

It was my wife, my editor of first resort, who finally shunted me into action. She gave me a present of the collected prose and letters of Osip Mandelstam, a giant of 20th century Russian literature and a victim of Stalin's camps. I love Mandelstam's poetry and last year read the twin masterpieces written by his wife, Nadezhda, about their life together and their forced separation: *Hope Against Hope* and *Hope Abandoned*. Handing me the collected prose my wife seemed to be saying: "See what this man sacrificed for his writing. Get going." She understood, of course, that guilt is the quickest route to an Irish Catholic's heart.

A deadline has been set for the completion of a portion of the book. And that deadline is the only reality I understand. The date sits marked in red crayon on a piece of paper directly above my desk. My agent reminds me constantly of how excited she is at the prospect of receiving a solid chunk of the work in progress. My anxiety level soars every time I hear this. But it will happen. It honestly will.

I am now fully on message, writing in every spare moment I can find. In the past, when writing non-fiction, I would get up very early in the morning to write. But that was before I had a toddler roaming the house. Try getting up and started before a two-and-a-half-year-old. Impossible. You are lovingly ambushed, dragged into the maw of breakfast and dressing and endless questions. And, as a parent who still spends a lot of time on the road, it is inconceivable to retreat from your child's outstretched arms.

A friend whose father is a well known novelist described how he and his brothers would creep around the house whenever their father was writing. Their childhood was burdened by this authorial silence. Whatever distraction is caused in my house, there will be no tyranny of silence. Let laughter and crying and tantrums and happiness reign.

This may, of course, mean that I am not a proper writer. From time to time I tell myself that a truly committed novelist would not be distracted by the domestic world, much less by the temporary thrills and passing glories of daily journalism. After thinking this for a few minutes I conclude that I know better. I write when I can, whenever I can. This is generally at night after the child has gone to sleep. I am a late-night animal. It is only then that my brain cranks into top gear.

In his book on writing, *For Love and Money*, Jonathan Raban has described the routine beautifully: "It is a curious occupation, this business of short-distance commuting between the bedroom and the study..." My study is in the attic, looking out over the narrow gardens of London W4. Through the window in the roof I can see the jets stacking up before Heathrow; through the side window comes the frequent noise of tomcats battling it out in the gardens of Chiswick. There are many of them, and they are fierce.

I had always imagined writing a novel in some rural idyll in Ireland, walking on the beach to clear my head after crafting a thousand or so beautiful words. But now that the words have started to come and the plot and characters are beginning to seem real, I need only the quiet and solitude of a house where everybody else is asleep. They are sleeping now. It is high time I was writing.

The writer is a BBC News special correspondent

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Iraq crisis • Armistice Day • "Outing" homosexuals • Labour Party control • Female role models • Newt Gingrich's resignation

ARMISTICE DAY

Eighty years on, the world's press pays tribute to the dead and the veterans of World War One

THE MIRROR
UK

WHO would have believed 80 years ago that there would be such scenes as the world witnessed yesterday? It says a lot for the human spirit that such remembrances can be held in a world which has changed so much. The First World War was to be the one which ended all wars. We learnt at a terrible cost that was not true. Wars will continue as long as there are tyrants who want to conquer other countries or crush other nations. Yesterday was a time to remember those who gave their lives. But EVERY day we need to remember why. And do what is necessary to prevent another generation suffering the same agonies.

LE MONDE
France

IF EUROPE wants to affirm its existence and its identity in the 21st century, it must not forget the history of countries once linked to its own. France wanted to honour Abdoulaye Ndiaye, 104, the last survivor of the Senagalese infantry men whn distinguished themselves on the fronts from 1914 to 1918. Ndiaye died Tuesday, the evening before he was to be decorated with the Legion of Honour. But the blood debt is there, and France owes a debt to Africa, to Ndiaye's children and grandchildren, in Senegal, but also to his children here in France, without identity papers, in the streets of our cities.Europe must not re-create itself by shutting the rest of the world out.

THE GUARDIAN
UK

THERE IS something valuable in the way remembrance joins us with our forbears and requires us to stretch our imaginations to encompass their lives, and deaths. Heavy injunctions about observing moments of silence are unnecessary and counterproductive. Compulsory memory, like rote learning, tends to be short-run and empty. The significance of 11am on the 11th is only this. We take peace (in this part of the hemisphere) for granted. An occasional moment of reflection on its blessings and its fragility has to be worthwhile.

LAS VEGAS SUN
US

WHILE ARMISTICE Day was originally established to honour the establishment of peace following a horrific war, this nation should remember that many wars have been fought since. It is up to this nation to make sure that it is adequately prepared to fight a war, no matter how terrible, if in fact we are to continue to have peace. While our nation must remain vigilant, we should reflect on the enormous price men and women paid to further the cause of freedom. It requires reflecting constantly on the horrors of war for Americans to comprehend the need for continued vigilance, preventing future tragedies.

THE SUN
UK

On this somber anniversary, we should fall silent. The two minutes' silence at 11 n'clock is a time to honour those who died for their country. Not just those who fell in the so-called 'war to end all wars' but those killed in World War II, Korea, Suez, Aden, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, the Gulf and other theatres of war. We enjoy liberty and peace today because they sacrificed their tomorrows. Two minutes is so little to give in honour of those who gave so much

THE AGE
Australia

Anzac Day has become a de facto national day. Much of the nation will pause to reflect upon the contribution of those who gave much, sometimes all, for their country. Whether it is from curiosity or respect, it is a sign of our strengthening maturity. More certain is the role war played in forging our nation. More certain still is that we should never forget the sacrifices made, or the ultimate futility of war.

Saddam must be stopped

THE JERUSALEM POST
Israel

UNTIL NOW, the Clinton administration has seen support for the Iraqi opposition as contradicting its effort to maintain the UN inspections regime. The current crisis, whether or not it results in the final demise of UN inspections, is an opportunity to change course. Former US president George Bush rightly recognised Iraq's invasion of Kuwait a:. the first major challenge to the post-Cold War world order. Clinton now has the opportunity to show that the world has learned from the wars of this century that democracies must be willing to decisively confront aggressive dictatorships, before they become even more dangerous.

HONG KONG STANDARD
Chinn

SADDAM HUSSEIN'S determination to prove himself is costing his people dear. His first politically tactless move nearly 10 years ago – his invasion of Kuwait – awakened even his Arab neighbours to possible dangers. So it was easy to build a worldwide consensus against him. But now the world is tiring nf Washington flexing its military muscles, as well as of Saddam's antics. The more the Iraqi leader thumbs his nose at Washington and the UN itself, the more his stock rises among strongly nationalistic Arabs who feel they have been grievously wronged by the West. But at what cost is this image building? The Iraqi people are suffering because of sanctions. Surely their welfare counts for something?

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
Australia

THE GREATEST need is as it always has been, to see Saddam and all he stands for removed. That can never be fully achieved hy external force, at least not with safety. It depends on forces within Iraq to ensure that, when Saddam goes, his departure is not followed by chaos but a transition, as orderly as can be hoped for in such circumstances, to a more internationally responsible government. The Australian Government is right to support President Clinton's decision to move against the Iraqi regime as the only appropriate response to Saddam's defiance of the UN. But the search for a wider solution, beyond the use of military force, must continue, for the sake of the Iraqi people, their neighbours, and world peace.

CRISIS IN IRAQ

World opinion on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's defiance of the UN

THE ECONOMIST
UK

THE DANGERS of letting Hussein run amok go far wider than the Gulf. Iraq's defiance will encourage other budding Saddams and badly undermine confidence in all the nuclear, chemical and biological arms control treaties that Iraq has broken, and that were devised to help keep some order in a dangerous world. The Security Council is one of the few mechanisms for tackling such threats to world peace, and it should do so. But if it will not, or cannot, respond to Iraqi belligerence, its divisions should not stop others – in this case America with as broad support as possible – from doing so. The worst outcome of all would be to let Iraq thumb its nose at the world and get away with it.

LA REPUBBLIGA
Itnly

PUNCTUAL AND predictable Saddam Hussein has war prospects in mind again. This time, however, he faces a different Clinton from the one in August. Clinton is now a very strong opponent. He's no longer suspected of trying to downplay the Lewinsky scandal by launching military operations. Instead, he has renewed his impeccable credentials as peacemaker between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Now he intends to settle the bill left by Bush who ordered victorious Gulf troops to end fighting, thus leaving Saddam's ambitions and repressive army intact. Everything indicates that, this time, Saddam will not get away with a compromise at the 11th hour. Faced with Clinton's wrath, Saddam has nothing to protect his people from the consequences of his still more atrocious and hopeless "bluffs".

"OUTING" HOMOSEXUALS

Editorial views on the highly charged issue of "outing" gays and lesbians in public life

THE GUARDIAN

THE SUN is not just out of touch, it is also wrong. The "fears" of a homosexual cabal are baloney. The politicians it names do not form a single coherent faction: on the contrary, they could all be identified with competing elements within the Cabinet. Nor are they a secret society: after all, being gay ia not like joining the masons, where one chooses to become a member. *The Sun*'s effort is in the worst tradition of conspiracy theories through the ages. Such a tactic has no place in our national dialogue.

DAILY MAIL

TOWARDS THE idea of reducing the age of homosexual consent, hostility remains strong. Given this deep and abiding repugnance towards a measure sought by only a small minority in the country, the Government's stubhorn determination to get it onto the statute book is almost inexplicable. An administration so adroit at interpreting the popular mood would surely be wise to think again. After all, it is now generally known that of the 17 men in the Cabinet before the Davies resignation, at least four, almost 25 per cent were homosexual. If the voters were to form the resentful suspicion that there is a connection between that statistic and the strange unwillingness to heed public feeling on this emotive issue, ministers would have only themselves to blame.

THE SUN

IS BRITAIN being run by a gay Mafia of politicians, lawyers, Palace courtiers, TV bigwigs – or even police officers? The public has a right to know how many homosexuals occupy positions of high power. Their sexuality is not the problem. The worry is their membership of a closed world of men with a mutual self-interest. Only the whole truth – not the partial truth Downing Street has been dispensing – will clear the air. We have a right to know about secret liaisons which might explain why certain policies are persistently pursued. Honest politicians have nothing to fear from the truth. To others who tremble to tell the real story, we simply say: come out and end the doubt.

THE MIRROR

THE WAVE of sentiment which carried Tony Blair to power and swept the nation after Diana's death showed how compassionate we have become. It is a fresh spirit in tune with the times and the birth of a new century and millennium. There can be no room for narrow-minded bigotry which scars those who hold it as well as those who are its victims. A growing majority are willing to judge people on what they do, not on what they are.

LABOUR PARTY CONTROL

Comment on the New Labour's management of candidates for regional office

THE GUARDIAN

TWO OF Labour's deepest instincts are at war. One is the commitment to spread power around, the other the urge to keep every last shred of it to itself. At issue is a simple question: now that Blair has entrusted local communities with power, will he let them pick their own leaders? Labour has failed to understand the logic of devolution. It still believes the usual rules of party discipline apply, still assumes the nld hierarchies of obedience can remain in place as the system itself is transformed. He should let London pick whoever it likes. If he gets involved, he gets blamed. If he stays out, he can let them make their own decisions – and their own mistakes.

DAILY MAIL

LIVINGSTONE AND Morgan are defying attempts to prevent them running for Mayor of London and leader of the Welsh Assembly. The Blairites are at last learning that, to adapt Lincoln's adage, you may control all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time – hut not all of the people all of the time.

EVENING STANDARD

THERE ARE no signs that Labour has yet identified a credible star to rival Mr Livingstone. All the signs suggest that Mr Blair and his colleagues have got themselves into a tangle about Labour's mayoral candidate, without much idea how to get out of it. Livingstone will give them no help. Why should he? He has nothing to lose, and nothing would make him more gleeful than to triumph over the New Labour machine. It is too soon to say how this atory will come out, but Downing Street will be very rash if it supposes that the Livingstone bid can be dismissed or easily crushed.

FEMALE ROLE MODELS

Verdicts on the announcement by Baroness Jay of acceptable role models for today's teenage girls

THE SUN

ROLE MODELS are very important. Leading by example can inspire people to high achievement. But is a pop star or an actress the right person for teenage girls to follow? We have nothing against Geri Halliwell (until she sings). But she's all image and no substance. Girls should be encouraged to model themselves on nurses, businesswomen or teachers. That's what they should wannabe.

DAILY MAIL

LIKE SOME girlie mag in need of yet another pathetic face-lift, the women's unit was yesterday relaunched hy that bevy of women ministers, Jowell, Jay and Liddell. The ever-earnest Ms Jowell has just been politically empowered to make the staggering revelation that many girls are more likely to look up to their mothers than to pop stars. Such condescending guff demeans both government and women. New Labour's apology for a women's unit – an idea whose time has gone – is dwindling into the politics of gesture at its most patronising.

THE TIMES

THE BIGGEST achievement of the Women's Unit will be if it manages to co-ordinate thinking across departments without creating a bureaucratic burden of its own. Too often policy is made or laws passed that, out of thoughtlessness rather than malice, are worse for women than for men. But the test for this administration will be if joined-up thinking is turned into joined-up action. The final test of success will be when a Women's Unit is genuinely no longer needed at all.

NEW STATESMAN

TEENAGE GIRLS, patronisingly cast as a tribe of Spice Girl groupies, were depressed. So, one hopes, was the Women's Unit, undermined by a paradox of its own devising. Its better ideas were reasonably aired in serious newspapers beloved of the Seventies feminists whose priorities it has remaindered. Ordinary girls and women, its new targets, would only have inferred that the new aim is the Barbieficatim of Britain – an outcome best described, in male tribal parlance, as a spectacular own goal.

NEWT GINGRICH'S RESIGNATION

Judgements on the departure of the Speaker of the US Congress

THE OREGONIAN
US

HIS LEADERSHIP style caused many of his lieutenants to chafe, but it kept a lid nn their animosities. Now the lid is off. Gingrich's decision is not the best thing that could have happened to the country right now. It diminishes the prospect of a ratinnal conclusion to the House's impeachment inquiry.

DE VOLKSKRANT
Netherlnnda

REPUBLICANS WILL have to look for new leadership outside of Congress, and that increases the chance for the Bush brothers to steer their party back to the political middle. But that could be preceded by an interim with many hloody heads.

NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG
Switzerlnnd

HIS RESIGNATION shows that not every politician clings on to office regardless of the consequences. Gingrich was more than just a speaker: he largely shaped Repuhlican politics after the Reagan-Bush era. But his four years as Speaker brought anything but a series of successes for the Republicans. The rebel wasn't always a prudent king.

THE SPECTATOR
UK

GINGRICH is the loser of the '98 election. Stunned to find someone in Washington going down even faster than Monica, President Clinton generously saluted the Speaker as a "worthy adversary". Alas, the Democrats' House Leader, Dick Gephardt, cruising past Newt's bullet-riddled body in the gutter, couldn't resist reversing back over it: "I hope that whoever succeeds Newt as Speaker will immediately begin the process of repairing the damage that was inflicted over the last four years."

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"It'a nice to know that my family is safe for life, especially when we are going into a recession."
Marjorie Londine, William Hague'a aunt, who has just won the National Lottery

"I do not go to see the girls. I am very fond of Peter, and sometimes I talk to the dancers about computers."
Terry Major-Ball, explaining his visits to Peter Stringfellow's night-club

"God is in Spaghetti Junction as much as anywhere else."
Archdeacon John Barton, Birmingham Cathedral

"The actor I feel really close to is Charlie Chaplin, because I am on the same wavelength as him."
George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury

"I can't believe Alun Michael is the Secretary of State for Wales. It's a triumph for mediocrity. I should know: he lives five doors from me."
Marc Cranfield-Adams, explaining why he has rejoined the Tories after defecting in 1995

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around the world

THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
US

WHEN DOES Modern Art become old, or at least nonmodern art. There's no question that Van Gogh, who died in 1890, and Seurat, who died in 1891, are no longer "new" artists. But compare with Old Masters from, say, the Italian Renaissance, are they really so old? You could easily spend an afternoon pondering whether Van Gogh's violent landscapes, or Seurat'a peculiar technique, have more in common with the artists who preceded them or followed them. To our eyes, at least, when you look at a Seurat or Van Gogh, you think of Modern Art. Which leads to another question: If the passage of time defines modernity, then what about the other works in the Museum of Modern Art? Will they have to be shipped, in due course, to an "old" museum, and replenished with newer paintings?

THE BANGALORE AGE
Indin

THE POLICE last week raided a public bath run by eunuchs in the beart of a city suburb after complaints by people in the locality that the hamam was being used for prostitution. However, no arrests were made. It turned out that eunuchs could not be arrested under the Prevention of Immoral Traffic Act, because of their peculiar sexual characteristics, a police officer explained. The public bath, which has six bathing rooms, has been run by the eunuchs for the past two and a half months.

THE DAILY STAR
Bangladesh

SOME POLITICALLY irate truckers thick-headedly parked their vehicles haphazardly at Shanir Akhra. The highways saw a 20 km-long traffic hold-up lasting over seven hours. Thousands of stranded travellers hurtled along nn a marathon walk to Dhaka . The truckers would have been sued in another country. Why not generate public interest on the subject of violating the fimdamental right of passage through highways and public thoroughfares? We need a deterrent legislation to put an end to the pernicious trend.

RESEARCH BY SALLY CHATTERTON

Excuse me? You've never seen a vodka luge?

SUE ARNOLD

What can you expect from a £60,000 party – champagne certainly, but caviare is out

ONE BIRTHDAY, and three extravagant parties on consecutive nights for a thousand guests bearing who knows how many gift-wrapped bottles of designer after-shave. There are, it seems, some benefits in being Prince of Wales and reaching 50. The last thrash is tonight at Highgrove.

Sadly, I won't be able to make it. We are having a party of our own at home and by the time I've escorted umpteen eight-year-olds back on the Tube from the Rainforest Café (last year I lost one) I know I won't have the energy to make it up to Gloucestershire.

Pity. It would have been interesting to see Prince Charles's wow factor; and before you accuse me of indelicacy – perish the thought, I'm a royalist through and through – I'd better explain that the wow factor is the yardstick by which professional party organisers measure a successful thrash.

The wow factor, for instance, at a party last Christmas hosted by a merchant bank was the 6-ft-high vodka luge. Then there was the man-made ocean built into Battersea Power Station for –

I'm so sorry, did someone say they didn't know what a vodka luge was? Forgive me, we urban sophisticates tend to assume erroneously that vodka luges are as common as fish suppers.

For the record, then, a vodka luge is a large ice sculpture made to order in any shape you like, through which a hole is drilled from top to bottom and then filled with a continuous flow of vodka. When you want a sing you just stick your mouth over the hole at the bottom. Corporate logos are the preferred shape for the vodka luge. More flamboyant hosts – pop stars, TV cooks, royal hairdressers – go for something a bit more risqué, such as matching male and female torsos. No, don't ask.

Talking of ice, the latest party fashion is to have the bar made entirely of ice. "I adore lighting an ice bar. You can get some marvellous effects," purred a party organiser. "The only problem is, they take three days to melt."

Now, that would have been ideal for Prince Charles. The ice bar at Hampton Court Palace last Thursday night could have been driven down to Windsor for Friday and then on up the M4 to Highgrove for the party tonight.

Penny-pinching, on the whole, is not uppermost in people's minds when planning parties, advised my good friend Tom, who's in the business. Two hundred quid a head, 300 guests is the sort of thing his clients are looking for, although he has just done a party for 30 people which worked out at £16,000 a head, not including the two 15-seater Gulf Stream jets. Good grief, I squeaked, where were they going? Tom said it was more than his job was worth to divulge such confidences. OK, so they're going to this unnamed destination, and then what do they do for £16,000 a head, I persisted? "Unnamed things," said Tom.

Incidentally, that ocean I was talking about at Battersea Power Station was for the knees-up Rupert Murdoch threw to launch Sky TV. For me the real wow factor would have been Mr Murdoch and his closer associates sailing across said ocean in a beautiful pea-green boat that subsequently capsized with no survivors. No, that's uncharitable. Make it a proper yacht.

So what can you expect to get from a party costing £60,000? Hot and cold running vintage champagne and beluga caviare? The champagne certainly, but caviare is definitely out. Retro is in, bangers and mash, fish and chips. For some reason debs like bagels. As for venue, I am reliably informed that the London Dungeon, the Natural History Museum and the top of the NatWest Building are dreadfully old hat, whereas the ticket office of Aldwych Tube Station, now defunct, and the Whitechapel Gallery have a waiting list.

"Wow factor," mused Neil, another professional organiser. "Well, I suppose the sexiest party I went to last year was the Romeo and Juliet event up in Hampstead. The theme was red roses. When you arrived you were greeted with a glass of champagne in a red glass with a bent green stem. Talk about detail. Then there were a series of incredible rooms. The first was Greek – pillars and caryatids; the second was an English garden with lots of people dressed as elves and pixies, not gnomes, who ran up and kissed you and then rushed back into the bushes. A bit strange that, come to think of it."

I doubt there'll be many elves and pixies up at Highgrove tonight. Prince Charles is a rather square host. His favourite band is The Dark Blues, which played at his 21st and is still going strong. "Listen guys, forget the wow factor," I can hear him saying to the party planner. "The ice bar, bangers and mash, and Mrs Parker Bowles coming out of a cake on the stroke of midnight are good enough for me."

THE SATURDAY PROFILE

EWAN MCGREGOR, ACTOR

Addicted to the starring role

THE IMAGE of Ewan McGregor that stays most clearly with those who have seen *Shallow Grave*, is of him rolling on the floor. Alex, the cocky Edinburgh journalist played by McGregor in his debut feature, has stumbled, along with his flatmates, on a suitcase full of cash. Having disposed of its dead owner, they are all suddenly rich. They discuss the need for caution, for restraint, the need to eschew any signs of extravagance... It is the cue for McGregor to explode into a riot of expenditure, to drown in champagne at a posh black-tie dinner and to sprawl orgasmically on the polished dining-room floor under Kerry Fox's dominating heel, a giggling incorrigible kid delighted by his own naughtiness.

Which is precisely how McGregor himself comes across, no matter how diverse the characters he has played in his crowded schedule of 10 films in four years. The most popular, and most celebrated, film star of his generation, he takes on unfeasible amounts of work, throws himself into wildly eclectic roles (from *Emma* to *Star Wars*), has taken on the stage with a play just starting at the Hampstead Theatre and through it all, has a high old time both on and off set. Despite being a famously doting family man, he is a legendary drinker, hell-raiser and party animal. He was nicknamed "Ewan McLigger" by *The Mirror*. He turns up in the inner sancta of Celebrity Nitelife – on the eve of the Scotland *vs* Brazil World Cup match, he was in the Paris bar where Stan Collymore thumped Ulrika Jonsson. Journalists love him because he gossips indiscreetly about fellow actors, and sounds off about the iniquities of the Hollywood "machine". At the Scottish People's Film Festival, after a screening of *Trainspotting* where they bleeped out offensive words, he accepted an award and said: "For those of you who missed it, the words were fuck, fuck, fucking, fuck and fuck." He revels in excess, getting stupendously drunk to a degree that makes his friend Liam Gallagher look like John Selwyn Gummer.

He is pure energy, the eternal yes, the uncontainable id, the go-for-it dreamer, the try-anything-once headcase.

In *Trainspotting*, his eyes shone with a mad light as he embraced destruction: "No thanks," he said, turning down the offer of preliminary drinks, "I'll just proceed directly to the intravenous injection of hard drugs...". In *A Life Less Ordinary*, he was the hopeless loser who kidnaps the feisty Cameron Diaz. And this week, he can be found in a cinema near you, going berserk on a rock'n'roll stage with his trousers round his ankles.

It is a scene that every viewer of *Velvet Goldmine* gleefully anticipates: the first sighting of Curt Wild, a demonic, hyperactive American rocker. Wild/McGregor is on stage, dealing with a hostile and heckling audience. He drops his silver jeans to moon at the crowd, waves his penis in their faces and bounces around like a madman. It is a display of ballistic egomania that almost eclipses the memory of Iggy Pop, the exhibitionist front man of the Stooges, on whom Curt Wild is clearly based.

"I was worried I wasn't going to make it through the number because I'm not very fit," he told *Interview* magazine this month, "but as soon as the camera started turning, I stopped worrying because this mad stuff started happening..." The fact that he was facing a crowd of actors rather than rock fans didn't bother him; he was in the Brixton Academy, on stage, getting his rocks off.

"It was great to be there at 4am in front of 400 extras, getting paid well for doing something that would normally end you up in prison," he told *Time Out*.

He was living out a fantasy. In his teens, he would routinely play Billy Idol's "Rebel Yell" at colossal volume before going to school in the morning. He grew up in Crieff, a small town in Perthshire, Scotland, and attended the grandly named Morrison's Academy, a private school where his father was the PE teacher; his mother was deputy head of a Dundee high school.

The burden of two magisterial parents gave the boisterous adolescent an attitude problem; he suffered from depression, and was hauled before the headmaster for antisocial behaviour. At 16 he left school, to general relief, and headed for Perth Repertory Theatre.

His ambition to be an actor was sealed by the age of nine. He attributes it to three things: his passion for black-and-white movies on television; his chronic adoration for every principal boy in every pantomime he attended; and the influence of his uncle, Dennis Lawson, the actor and singer best known for his starring role in *Local Hero*. Lawson used to visit his Perth relations, travelling up from London in his cool flares and Afghan coat, and bringing a whiff of green room glamour and metropolitan trendiness to McGregor's provincial backyard. Ewan left home, took a drama course at Kirkcaldy College of Technology, then headed for London, aged 17. His first film part was as an extra in *A Passage to India*, when, he said, "my life went into widescreen. I had a ball, and the depression lifted". In his final year at the Guildhall School of Speech and Drama, he got a breakthrough: a part in Dennis Potter's *Lipstick on your Collar*, in which he played a disaffected War Office clerk who fantasises about becoming Elvis, and shook a mean tail-feather in the rock'n'roll dream sequences. The part could have been written for him.

At 23, as Alex in *Shallow Grave*, he looked every inch the new star on the block – handsome, callow, devious and dammably sexy. At the end, when he is once again lying on the floor (it's a motif of the film) but with a huge kitchen knife skewering his arm to the lino, he manages a radiant grin that sums up all the actor's indomitable, unsinkable life force. It was a good year for him – 1994. He'd met Eve Mavrakis, a French set designer, on the set of *Kavanagh QC*, the legal-eagle television drama series. They were married in France a year later. "I completely believe I will be with her for ever," he says fervently, "and that we'll go through everything together. Otherwise I wouldn't be married." They now have a daughter, Clara, who will be three in February, and live in some luxury in Belsize Park, north London.

Shallow Grave was the first feature by the gifted troika of Danny Boyle (director), Andrew McDonald (producer) and John Hodge (writer). They were all together at the Sundance Film Festival, when they heard that Channel Four had agreed to co-finance *Trainspotting*, from Irvine Welsh's best-selling book. They gave McGregor the script to read, but without guaranteeing him the key role of Renton. "He was like a Christmas present," McGregor said of the part. "I'd been waiting for him to come along and when I read the script I thought, well, here he is – here he comes. For months beforehand, I thought about nothing else, and I threw myself into it 100 per cent and played him with a passion."

It was a curious kind of starring role – a skinny, crop-haired, pustular heroin junkie whose most sublime moment is diving head first into a crammed and reeking lavatory to rescue the opium suppositories he has just voided, and emerging in the blue, transcendent waters of druggy bliss. It was a squalid, vicious movie, desperately uncertain in tone, but it grabbed the mid-Nineties zeitgeist by the throat and shook it. McGregor's skinny, drenched image was on every bus, advertisement hoarding and magazine cover.

The Boyle-Hodge-McDonald team cast him in a third film, *A Life Less Ordinary*. They seemed to be a quartet that would last for ever, with McGregor for ever playing d'Artagnan to their Three Musketeers. But that moment of uncertainty at the Sundance Festival, when they wouldn't guarantee their star a part in *Trainspotting*, proved to be prescient. For their next feature, *The Beach*, based on Alex Garland's backpacker best-seller, they bypassed McGregor and offered the lead to Leonardo DiCaprio. It seems an extraordinary slap in the face to a lucrative colleague and friend, but McGregor is philosophical. "They needed more money and he's more bankable," he told *Time Out*. "There was no big falling-out, but I was hurt. I haven't seen Danny [Boyle] since."

He has not, of course, spent many nervous hours waiting by the telephone for a substitute project. There are about six McGregor films awaiting release. In *Rogue Trader* he plays Nick Leeson, the spendthrift dealer who brought down Barings bank. He plays a thick pigeon-fancier in Jim Cartwright's *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, with Jane Horrocks and Michael Caine, directed by Mark Herman who previously directed him in *Brassed Off*. More recently, he filmed *Serpent's Kiss*, about a 17th-century craftsman who falls for his employer's wife (Greta Scacchi), and flew to America to make *Nightwatch* with Patricia Arquette, playing a law student accused to being a serial killer. And he was signed up by the legendary George Lucas to play Obi Wan Kenobi in the "prequel" to *Star Wars, Balance of the Force*.

The only rip in this seamless robe of success concerns his family. In interviews, a querulous note sometimes sounds about the strain put on his domestic life by his inability to say no to anything. "Working on films back to back, I began to find I was losing myself... I'd completely forgotten what it was like to get up in the morning and sit and watch the telly. I didn't have a bath for two years because I didn't have a fucking tub." His feelings that he might be neglecting his family crystallised during a terrible period when his baby daughter Clara contracted meningitis and nearly died. As she was rushed into the casualty unit of the Chelsea and Westminster hospital, Ewan was in Los Angeles, guest-starring (ironically) in *ER*, guest-directed by Quentin Tarantino. He flew home in a panic and found Clara wired up to a heart machine. "Your daughter is doing well", the doctors told him. He pulled a photograph from his pocket. "This is what my daughter looks like when she is doing well," he tearfully informed them.

Clara was in hospital for nearly three weeks, but made a full recovery. McGregor was badly shaken by the experience. He has been through a period of emotional retrenchment this summer, turning down films, seeing his family, playing golf and preparing to go back to the theatre. From now to 2 January, he can be found on stage at the Hampstead Theatre, playing the title role in *Little Malcolm and his Struggle Against the Eunuchs*, by the Sixties one-hit wonder David Halliwell. It is directed by his Uncle Dennis, as if the born-again family man were determined to keep his professional life familial too. The spring will be devoted to his pet project of producing a film about Nora Barnacle, the Galway chambermaid who became James Joyce's earthy consort.

An exhaustingly energetic fellow, he has done more at 27 than most actors (and most drinkers) achieve in a lifetime. And he has scruples about quality: His stated reason for returning to the theatre, for the first time in five years, is fear of complacency. "I felt I was getting a bit lazy," he says. "I want to remember what it's like being really frightened again. The fear of being crap is always what makes you good, I think." And that is as near to discussing his "motivation" as Ewan McGregor is ever likely to get.

JOHN WALSH

LIFE STORY

Origins: Born 31 March 1971, in Crieff, Scotland.
Family background: Father, Jim, a teacher at Crieff's Morrison's Academy; mother Carol, deputy head of King's Park High School in Dundee. His uncle, actor Denis Lawson. Brother, Colin, RAF pilot.
Vital statistics: Married, Eve (right), a French production designer, with daughter, Clara.

Training: Guildhall School of Music and Drama.
First role: Private Hopper in Dennis Potter's *Lipstick on Your Collar* on TV.
Films: 21, from *Being Human* (1993) to James Joyce in *Noro*, Nick Leeson in *Rogue Trader* and *Star Wars, Episode 1*.
Current role: Bisexual title role in a play, *Little Velvet Malcolm and his Struggle Against the Blue Room Voice*, co-starring Jane Horrocks.
On his influences: "Sex, my uncle, and black-and-white movies."

'Working on films back to back, I began to find I was losing myself' *David Sandison*

ACCIDENTAL HEROES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

14: WILLIE NELSON, COUNTRY SINGER

WHEN FRANK Sinatra died, several obituaries named him, with some justification, the Voice of America. Willie Nelson – happily still with us and still performing – is something else, not so much the Voice of America as a road map of America.

In a nation whose popular music has been shaped and defined by the shiftless nature of its people, Nelson is the ultimate hobo. Born in 1933, north of Waco in Texas, in a cotton-farming town called Abbott that doesn't even exist any more, Nelson has barely stopped moving since.

Abbott was the kind of town built for escaping from. Around the time Nelson was born – at the height of the Depression – it looked like a B western, the scene where the tumbleweed blows down the dusty main street and the camera zooms in on the old town limits sign: "population 300", carved into a lopsided battered board.

But unlike thousands of other performers emerging from backwoods beginnings, Nelson is no country cornball, no Wild West cliché. His father was a travelling mechanic; his mother went looking for work one day and never returned; so Nelson was raised by grandparents with an eclectic record collection, including Sinatra and jazz as well as popular Western swing artists such as Ernest Tubb and Bob Wills.

These varying influences were not lost on Nelson, which is probably why he has always managed to appeal to audiences for whom the words "country" and "western" in any kind of proximity are normally anathema. Nelson's jazz phrasing is as distinctive an element of his music as the melancholic autumnal voice that can render the most banal material deeply affecting. In the twilight glow I see her/ Blue eyes crying in the rain/ When we said goodbye and parted/ I knew we'd never meet again. This fairly unremarkable opening stanza from one of Willie Nelson's greatest hits is elevated by his performance into a kind of truck-stop poetry.

Perhaps it is because he is singing about what he knows. For 40 years, carrying the same battered guitar, Nelson has criss-crossed his homeland. The Willie Nelson website describes him as "a highwayman, a sad, spiritual poet endlessly travelling America, his voice as cracked and weather-beaten as the well worn leather skin that clings to his frame. He doesn't want to stop. Probably can't."

But if Nelson had merely carried on until retirement age performing more or less the same act, he would probably earn nothing but our scorn. He has in fact continually renewed his artistic vision. His albums, which number more than 100 – some estimates put the figure as high as 200 – draw deeply on pretty well every strand in American popular music.

Nelson's endless striving for something new has no doubt played a part in his chequered romantic history – four times married – and his experiments with various drugs alongside his beloved whisky.

The affection felt for Nelson by his compatriots crosses not just musical divides but social and political borders as well. He understands redneck culture, yet behaves like a hippy. He regularly joins family farmers to campaign against factory farming. Some idea of the support Nelson commands became apparent when he was landed with a $16m claim for back taxes. His defence – "I forgot" – was in fact quite convincing, coming from Nelson, and when he was forced by the IRS to sell his possessions, the purchasers returned them to him.

But Nelson was far from being a tax-dodging pariah; his contemporaries beat a path to his door to record with him – Ray Charles, Bob Dylan, Neil Young and others – while the man himself continues to get his kicks on Route 66 and wherever the muse takes him.

THE WEEKLY MUSE

BY MARTIN NEWELL

November rides and all the skies
Are dirty swabs of cotton wool.
St Martin's Little Summer comes
And leaves the leaf-mould ditches full.
A rheumy-eyed old soldier sees
Through brazier smoke across the yard
A skirmish in the firethorn trees
As starling units go in hard.

Now cannabis: the Lords progress,
The trials have met with some success.
It helps glaucoma and MS
But leaves your memory in a mess...
What was I saying back then? Oh yes,
It leaves your memory... I digress.
But let's not be too cavalier,
For even if a breakthrough's near
You shouldn't compromise a peer
By asking if he's tried the gear.

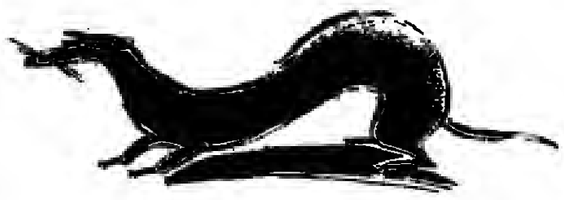
The mane of hair, the killer pout –
She's Jagger's daughter without a doubt.
At five foot nine and just fourteen
She wants to join the fashion scene;
But Daddy's rather less than keen
That she should be a catwalk queen.
All kind of perils wait out there
For young girls who are unaware,
Not least the old Lotharios
Who date the models after shows.
So here's a deal that she could do
To barter with the old yahoo:
Go up to Dad and say one thing:
"I won't pose... if you don't sing."

And no cure for the common cold:
The virus has a stranglehold –
About five million up the spout –
And long research has failed to rout
The blocked-up nose, the aching head
And hogroll underneath the bed.

The Beast of Brent or Mayor Ken?
Those very nice young Labour men
Are stepping up covert attacks
To stop his wagon in its tracks.
The Millbank Dalek intercedes
To say what London *really* needs.
Be careful, cherubs, how you spin:
You might let Jeffrey Archer in.

Now Ms Lewinsky meets the press
With raven hair and flouncy dress,
A dyed pink poodle by her side.
The tabloid boys – no easy ride –
Ask, "What about the wacky hound?"
The poodle says, "Bill sent her round."

THE WEASEL



Disappointed by Prince Charles's lemon curd and my compatriots' oyster-eating habits, I find solace in my passion for gasometers

THE DECKLE-EDGED invite might conceivably have been lost in the post, but I guess we have to bite the bullet. Inexplicably, the Weasels have been omitted from the guest list of a certain wing-ding taking place tonight at Highgrove House. A shame, really, because I had prepared some excellent jokes about my fellow guests. Q: What is the leguminous link between Rowan Atkinson and Mrs Drue Heinz? A: Mr Bean. I'm sure that such genial joshing would have evoked a good-natured chuckle from King Harald of Norway. Instead, Mrs W and self may be forced to watch the glittering tribute shown on ITV tonight, *A Royal Celebration*, starring such irresistible funsters as Roger Moore and Sir George Martin (you might recall that the Beatles used to refer to the starchy record producer behind his back as "the Duke of Edinburgh").

Still, there's no reason why those of us who have been excluded from the Highgrove high jinks should not enjoy the same culinary delights. I think it's a safe bet that the comestibles on offer will include items from Prince Charles's Duchy Originals brand, available to all through the snootier sort of outlet. Doubtless, Camilla will be dishing out Duchy Originals gingered biscuits with a free hand ("Go on, stick one behind your ear for later") as the evening wears on. Nor is it wholly beyond the bounds of possibility to imagine Stephen Fry tucking into a spot of regal lemon curd in the course of the festivities. At a recent degustation in Weasel Villas both items were judged to be most toothsome, though the biscuits were not exactly a snip at £1.99 for 14.

The only thing that puzzles me is the name Duchy Originals. It is hard to see how the lemon curd could be original in any way. This is odd, since the Prince of Wales is a notorious stickler for correct use of English. Jonathan Dimbleby's long-winded hagiography quotes HRH exploding in 1990: "All the people in my office, they can't speak English properly. They can't write English properly... And that is because English is taught so bloody badly." Of course, I didn't really expect the lemon curd to have been stirred by the Prince's own hand, but I thought this "original" confection might have been the work of one of his peons down in Cornwall. Instead, the small print on the label reveals it to have been "manufactured under licence by Crabtree & Evelyn Ltd, London W8".

A spokesperson for this Malaysian-owned outfit revealed: "We work closely with Duchy Originals to develop specific recipes they're happy with." The resulting elixir is produced at C&E's jam works in Somerset. Despite his disappointing lack of personal involvement, I'd hazard that a parenthetic instruction on the label bears the distinctively quirky touch of Prince Chas: "Delicious in pies, puddings and on toast (or by the spoonful straight from the jar)."

IT IS always reassuring to discover that others share your secret passion. For years now, Mrs Weasel has refused to let me display a number of rather unusual photographs: "Horrible things. You're not putting those up." But now I discover I'm not alone. The Museum of London has mounted an exhibition of paintings on the same theme, though it admits they may not be to everyone's taste ("an unlikely symbol of London"). They are by Mark Cazalet, who was commissioned by a fellow enthusiast, the late Marcus Samuelson, to paint a cycle of eight works depicting London's splendid gasholders.

The *Cathedrals of Industry* exhibition begins with a diptych devoted to the celebrated cluster of five gasometers that loom behind King's Cross station. Beside the oleaginous waters of Regent's Park canal, their filigreed ironwork mirrors the Gothic spires of St Pancras station. A second diptych features the familiar chunk of Victorian ironmongery, often mentioned in the commentaries of the late Brian Johnston, that overlooks the Oval cricket ground. But most striking is one of four studies of the behemoth at Kensal Rise, chummily known as "the Colonel" to locals. Cazalet's depiction of this titanic crown is wonderfully creepy. The soaring grid is eerily illuminated by a full moon, while a row of sodium lights casts a hellish orange glow on the vast riser below. A stray whiff of gas is almost palpable.

Should Mr Cazalet choose to explore this theme further, there is a towering example at Battersea (called "Jumbo" by Victorians) and a tremendous empty holder, with a metal ladder zigzagging up the iron grid, behind Habitat in Croydon. Best of all is the East Greenwich holder, where once I took Mrs W during our courting days (she has never quite recovered). A near neighbour of the Millennium Dome, it is being repainted in dark brown and beige for the festivities. "It is not going to be hidden," a spokesman for English Partnership, the government agency that owns the site, assured me. "In fact, many visitors have been more impressed by the gasholder than the Millennium Dome." Quite right too.

THOUGH I now pitch my tent among the heavyweights of the comment pages, I still keep an avuncular eye on my erstwhile colleagues at the *Indy magazine*. Last week, I cheered Simon Hopkinson's view about the bizarre English way with oysters. "One thing that I cannot bear is to see them cut from their shells and then flipped over," he thundered. "The juices trickle off the shell and, anyway, it looks so much prettier and natural when presented the right way up." Though I rarely patronise the louche oyster bars of the West End, I encounter this distressing practice on the Scarborough seafront. However much I object, my oysters are still presented "easy over". I suppose it is an attempt to placate those who agree with Dr Johnson – "He was a brave man who first ate an oyster". But, following Hopkinson's rebuke, England's shuckers will surely observe the magisterial injunction of Larry Sanders: "No flipping!"

While on the topic, I have a beef of my own concerning the parsimonious quantities of oysters offered in restaurants. I recall that Marco Pierre White's "signature dish" of oysters in champagne sauce with spaghetti consisted of just three shellfish. You'd no sooner sniffed it, then – puff! – it was gone. The same stinginess is apparent in the new *Livebait Cookbook* (Hodder, £20), which remarks of a recipe for oysters with caramelised leeks: "At Livebait we serve three shells, which makes a good portion." Not at Weasel Villas, it doesn't. I'd like to remind Britain's gastronomic Gauleiters of Brillat-Savarin's approving recollection of an acquaintance in 1798 who consumed 32 dozen oysters as an hors d'oeuvre and then went on to tackle a large dinner "with the vigour and bearing of a man only starting to eat".

SPIRIT OF THE AGE

PAUL VALLELY

An audience with the alien

I HAVE been talking to an extraterrestrial entity. His name is Omar. And he is not best pleased with me.

Let me begin by saying that I went to meet him with an open mind. You may find that hard to believe. But in trying to discover what people believe – and what attracts them to it – you have to do a bit of suspending of your own disbelief.

After all, what would you say to a religion centred around the teachings of a bloke who sat around in a cave and did nothing? Or one based on a book dictated to one man by an angel in a dream? Or one that maintains that God was born in a stable, was killed and then rose from the dead? But the fact is that these faiths – Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity – are judged by non-adherents by different criteria, such as what beneficial impact they have upon the lives of believers, and on the rest of the world.

So, when I found the leaflet about Omar in an alternative "healing centre" in Brighton, full of New Age crystals, books and American videos, I decided to discount the fact that he was an extraterrestrial and see what fruits he bore. I went along to make contact with him.

You have to take this stuff seriously. Even in the Seventies, when Hinnell's authoritative *Handbook of Living Religions* was published, the rise in what was then called "psychic" and "magical" new religions was estimated to be 104 times higher than the popularity of more mainstream "new" religions, such as Mormonism.

In the two decades since then, the New Age movement has grown exponentially to become a significant feature of the Western world's spiritual life. Today, as much as 25 per cent of the adult population is said to have explored its ideas in some way.

When I rang up to make an appointment with Catherine, the "channel" through whom Omar communicates with the world, her minder, Clive, sounded rather fierce. Omar was not a doctor, he said; he would not tell me about my health, or my job, or my love life. Just my spiritual growth. Right, I said. And I should come along with a list of spiritual questions, said Clive, because Omar only answered questions. Right, I said.

I jotted a few down on the train on the way there. You know the sort of thing: How do I achieve inner peace? Should we strive for knowledge or detachment? Why is there suffering in the world? What is evil? What happens at the end of this life? What must I do to gain eternal life? And so forth.

This, however, was not what Omar wanted. I arrived at the Brightoo healing-centre to be ushered upstairs, past a rickety wooden gate and into the presence of Catherine. She was a woman of most enormous girth, wearing a gigantic floral skirt, who sat on a bed surrounded by cushions. The room smelt faintly of urine.

She was in a bad mood to start with. Someone had chipped the 17th-century green glass globe which she used to channel Omar. Disgruntled, she held it in one hand as she closed her eyes and started to twitch her pudgy arms, before – her soft-toned voice suddenly husky with extraterrestriality – swiftly announcing his arrival with the words: "Omar Ready."

"How do I stay focused upon what is important?" I asked, starting with an easy ooe. "Bring matters to attention," Omar began portentously, before moving on to reveal what was, for a resident of an outer dimension, an admirable grasp of colloquial English. He advised me to get in contact with my Higher Self, and when I asked what its requirements were he told me that there were no requirements – only hope or desire. I did not need communion with others to do this, Omar said, only a focus on inner self.

I was beginning to get the picture. This seemed familiar New Age turf. The enlightenment and harmony being ushered in by the Age of Aquarius seems singularly focused on desire rather than the discipline required by the established religions. Monism, relativism and individual autonomy are where we are all heading in our quest for greater knowledge and a new consciousness.

Would the Higher Self continue after death? But when I asked that, Omar began to go ungrammatical and even more impenetrable. I don't quite follow, I said; are you saying there is life after death, or not? The fat lady twitched her am-dram shudder once more. She opened her eyes. "He has broken the connection," she said in her ordinary voice. "He did not like the questions. They are too outside, not from inside. Call for Clive. These are not the kind of questions that people usually ask."

Close encounters of the spiritual kind? Or maybe not

So what kind of questions did other people usually ask, I wondered. She muttered at me, but nothing coherent. Back came Clive, a burly, balding chap with wispy hair at the sides and straggly sideburns. They sent me from the room. I was not spiritual enough for channelling, they told me when they called me back. It was too advanced. I would be better starting with a reading from Benedict.

He was summoned. Yes, the unshaven, fine-featured epicene Benedict said, when I told him my questions; these indicated the wrong kind of spirituality. If I came back in half an hour he would do me a reading.

But when I returned, Benedict had gone off the idea and palmed me off with Chris, a Tarot reader, whose cards told me that I was not spiritual, but a practical chap who would be best sticking to that, as I could make a lot of money.

I finally admitted defeat and left the centre. At a nearby baker's I bought a lump of bread pudding and a cup of coffee, and went down to the pebbly beach. There, gazing into the heavy-laden, grey sea, a practical chap, I sat down and ate and drank them.

DAYS LIKE THESE

5 NOVEMBER 1878

CHARLES DARWIN, naturalist (pictured), writes in a letter:

"If it were universally known that the birth of children could be prevented, and this were not thought immoral by married persons, would there not be great danger of extreme profligacy amongst unmarried women, and might we not become like the native societies in the Pacific? In the course of the century France will tell us the result in many ways, and we can already see that the French nation does not spread or increase much."

6 NOVEMBER 1918

CHIPS CHANNON, a soldier in Paris, records in his diary a dinner with Marcel Proust and Jean Cocteau:

"Their manners, usually so bad, were excellent tonight, and they seemed to compete as to which could be the more engaging. I felt stupid between the two wittiest men in Europe, drenched in a Niagara of epigrams. Jean is a stylist and his conversation is full of fire... Proust is quieter, longer-winded and more meticulous. His blood-shot eyes shine feverishly, as he pours out ceaseless spite and venom about the great. His foibles are Ruskin, genealogy and heraldry. He knows the arms and quarterings of every duke in Europe."

19 NOVEMBER 1932

ERIC BLAIR writes to his agent:

"Many thanks for your letter. I sent off the proof [*Down and Out in Paris and London*] with the printer's queries on it yesterday. As a pseudonym, a name I use when tramping is P S Burton, but if you don't think this sounds a probable kind of name what about Kenneth Miles. George Orwell. H Lewis Allways. I rather favour George Orwell"

19 NOVEMBER 1899

RAYMOND ASQUITH writes to his father from Balliol College, Oxford:

"On Wednesday our rugby team played King's, Cambridge; after which they had a big dinner at 5pm and both teams were desperately drunk by half past 6: they made hay of the quad, which irritated our dons, brawled in the streets, which drew down the Proctors on them, and are also being prosecuted by the South Western Railway for wrecking a train and assaulting porters at the station: three men have been sent down and the rest gated."

IAN IRVINE

Our King says he can't carry on

CLASSIC PODIUM

From a speech in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin, on the abdication of King Edward VIII

(10 DECEMBER 1936)

"AN ADVISER to the Crown can be of no possible service to his master unless he tells him at all times the truth as he sees it, whether that truth be welcome or not. I told His Majesty that I had two great anxieties – one, the effect of a continuance of the kind of criticism that, at that time, was proceeding in the American press, the effect it would have in the Dominions, and particularly in Canada, where it was widespread, and the effect it would have in this country. And then I reminded him of what I had often told him in years past.

The British monarchy is a unique institution. The Crown in this country, through the centuries, has been deprived of many of its prerogatives, but today, while that is true, it stands for far more than it ever has done in its history. The importance of its integrity is, beyond all question, far greater than it has ever been, being as it is not only the last link of Empire that is left, but the guarantee in this country, so long as it exists in that integrity, against many evils that have affected and afflicted other countries. There is no man in this country, to whatever party he may belong, who would not subscribe to that.

But while this feeling largely depends on the respect that has grown up in the last three generations for the monarchy, it might not take so long, in face of the kind of criticisms to which it was being exposed, to lose that power far more rapidly than it was built up – and once lost I doubt if anything could restore it.

I saw the King on Monday, 16 November, and I began by giving him my view of a possible marriage. I told him that I did not think that a particular marriage was one that would receive the approbation of the country. That marriage would have involved the lady becoming Queen. I did tell His Majesty once that I might be a remnant of the old Victorians, but I did know what the reaction of the English people would be to any particular course of action, and I told him that, so far as they went, I was certain that it would be impracticable. I cannot go further into the details, but that was the substance.

I pointed out to him that the position of the King's wife was different from the position of the wife of any other citizen in the country; it was part of the price which the King has to pay. His wife becomes Queen; the Queen becomes the Queen of the country; and, therefore, in the choice of a Queen the voice of the people must be heard. It is the truth expressed in those lines that may come to your minds:

His will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth;
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole State.

Then His Majesty said to me that he wanted to tell me something that he had long wanted to tell me. He said, "I am going to marry Mrs Simpson, and I am prepared to go."

I said: "Sir this is most grievous news, and it is impossible for me to make any comment on it today." He told the Queen that night; he told the Duke of York and the Duke of Gloucester the next day; and for the rest of the week, so far as I know, he was considering that point.

In the meantime, a suggestion had been made to me that a possible compromise might be arranged. The compromise was that the King should marry, that Parliament should pass an Act enabling the lady to be the King's wife without the position of Queen.

I gave him the reply that I was afraid it was impracticable. He took my answer with no question, and he never referred to it again.

The King has told us that he cannot carry, and does not see his way to carry, these almost intolerable burdens of kingship without a woman at his side, and we know that. This crisis, if I may use the word, has arisen now rather than later from that very frankness of His Majesty's character, which is one of his many attractions. My efforts during these last days have been directed, as have the efforts of those most closely round him, in trying to help him to make the choice which he has not made; and we have failed.

We have, as the guardians of democracy in this little island, to see that we work to maintain the integrity of democracy and of the monarchy, which is now the sole link of our whole Empire and the guardian of our freedom."

THE SATURDAY ESSAY

Idle, sad and baffled by sex. What's wrong with men?

ANTHONY CLARE

Men, renowned for their ability to get stoned, drunk or to be sexually daring, appear terrified of themselves

Men appear scared by the prospect of revealing that they can be – and often are – depressed *MSI*

What in God's name is wrong with men? Our prisons bulge with them. They wreak havoc on roads for all their reputation as gifted drivers. Drugs, alcohol, Aids, gambling, single-parenthood – the statistics consistently confirm that when it comes to antisocial behaviour, risk-taking and social mayhem, men win gold. Yet for all their behaving badly, they do not seem any the happier. The rise in the number of young men killing themselves across much of Europe has been termed an epidemic. For the old, the situation is no better. For every six elderly women in 100,000 who kill themselves each year, 40 elderly men take their own lives. And the suicide figures are viewed as the tip of an iceberg of an even larger epidemic of male depression, an epidemic hidden only because men are either too proud or too emotionally constipated to admit to their feelings being out of control. Men, renowned for their ability and inclination to get stoned, drunk or sexually daring, appear to be terrified by the prospect of revealing that they can be – and often are – depressed.

Perhaps it was ever thus, and all that is happening now is that men are coming out of the emotional closet. Or maybe there is a genuine rise in male dissatisfactions. There is no shortage of suggested causes. Top of the list is the growing assertiveness of women. The fact that men still outnumber women in positions of power across the globe, are paid more, and still glower downwards through the glass ceiling, serves only to obscure the extent to which the very foundations of all this patriarchy is being steadily eroded. In every education authority in England and Wales, girls are outclassing boys – in primary schools, through secondary education and right into the universities. In the European Union, 120 women have university degrees compared with every 100 men. And on leaving school, women's prospects exceed men's, not just here but in other European countries, too. In Germany, for example, between 1991 and 1995, twice as many men lost their jobs as did women. In West Germany, women even gained 210,000 jobs, while men lost 400,000. Young men are more and more aware that the basis on which their superiority and power have rested over the centuries is evaporating in a flatulent, self-deceiving puff. Many are reacting with a mixture of aggression and self-destruction.

And if changes in education, training and work are not sufficient to demoralise the average man, there is the dismal public soap opera of man's relationship with his penis. For one thing, he appears unable to keep the damn thing under control. This affliction even affects the most powerful man in the world! He, who has been entrusted with pressing or not pressing the nuclear button, cannot keep the same hand from the zip on his trousers. In Britain, ministers of state, who exude a pompous self-satisfaction with the political power they wield, are regularly revealed to be randy goats unable to resist a shapely thigh or a heaving cleavage. And there is no respite from exposure to the darker side of male sexuality – the relentless media revelations of rape, paedophilia, sexual violence committed overwhelmingly by men against women and children. Innocent men, rather like the relatives of torturers or Gestapo agents, find themselves apologising for crimes they have not committed – but for many, the very fact of being a man is itself the mark of Cain.

At a recent meeting in my old Alma Mater, University College Dublin, Germaine Greer declared that underlying much of the dynamic between men and women is "the fear of the unknown female, the contempt of the known female". She is right, I believe, but her analysis needs to be taken further. Why are men so fearful? What is fuelling the contempt? Might the fear, the contempt, be related to a deeper anxiety concerning their own sexuality? I realise that here I am treading on dangerous ground. Put a foot wrong and you risk being accused of blaming women for men's inability to control their sexual inclinations. That is what many men believe, and some even act on it. Women are feared, despised and sometimes even destroyed because of what men perceive women do to them. Male sexuality is unpredictable, capricious, dangerous; but the male is tempted to project all this and more on to women – and many do just that.

It is, of course, true that women, by their very presence, remind men of the precarious control men exercise over their own sexuality. Given the extent to which men make a fetish of being in control, any suggestion of a lack threatens the very essence of what, to many men, being a male is all about. What made much of the discussion of Bill Clinton's sexual behaviour fascinating was the extent to which the hoary old Garden of Eden myth that men fall because women tempt them is still alive and flourishing, even within the breast of many a robust feminist. Many men, and many women too, blame the seductive Monica for leading poor old Bill astray, a pathetically predictable and inadequate analysis enthusiastically seized upon by those men who, rather than expose the nature of male sexuality, its relationship to power and aggression and control, to a genuine, rigorous and honest analysis, retreat into a self-pitying and ultimately depressing moan about the difficulty of being a sexual man in a dynamic relationship with a contemporary woman. Men, particularly young men, do seem discomfited and threatened by what has happened to the self-confidence and the self-esteem of women and many, characteristically, prefer to project the blame for their own misfortunes back on to women than to accept that the change in women necessitates, indeed demands, a corresponding change in men.

Greer mischievously taunts men for our preoccupation with the size, shape and erectile potential of our genitalia, dismissing our prized manhood with Sylvia Plath's concise description as – "old turkey neck and gizzards". Men, particularly young men, are still disconcerted by mocking references to their genitals. *The Full Monty* quite explicitly drew an analogy between the male inadequacy consequent on the loss of a job and male anxiety concerning genital potency. Men must share, bond, emotionally relate; must reveal themselves, if they are to be fully human, went the movie's message – and then, the ultimate male cop-out, everything was indeed revealed to the cinema audience at the finale – save "old turkey neck and gizzards"! Germaine Greer is wrong if she attributes the male preoccupation with the shape, size and erectile potential of the penis to inordinate pride. It is founded on an incorrigible fear – not the Freudian fear of castration so much as the Adlerian fear of ridicule. Are we up to it, ask today's men anxiously, fretting at their social skills and shrivelled cocks; are we up to competing, succeeding, achieving, conquering, controlling, asserting, pontificating, as well as getting it up?

And there is the unavoidable reality that, unlike the female orgasm, a male erection cannot be feigned. The obvious visibility of the male genitals, their state and size, aroused and unaroused, are readily measurable and comparable. Hardly surprising, therefore, that the arrival of Viagra is accompanied not merely by much dodgy humour and double-entendre but by po-faced yet panicky political discussions about the bankrupting of health finances due to a stampede by men to get their hands on the latest "old turkey gizzard" stimulant.

And when Greer declared in *The Female Eunuch* that the male perversion of violence is an essential condition of the degradation of women, that the penis is conceived of as a weapon, where was the male response? How have men answered the accusation that the male sexual drive is blindly aggressive, egotistical, narcissistic, destructive? With a few admirable exceptions, we have responded for the most part by behaving in precisely those ways – aggressively denigrating, ridiculing and dismissing the feminist analysis as so much emotional tosh.

And all that the little Y chromosome accounts for – the male strength, stature, muscle power, attributes which in a world of iron and steel and coal, of shipbuilding, labouring, lumberjacking, soldiering provided men with their justification and their self-importance, count for damn all now. This very week has been full of reminiscences of the Great War, a war distinguished among many things by the terrible losses sustained by European manhood. It marked the end of war as an overwhelmingly male preserve. Today, citizens, male and female, as well as soldiers, die in armed conflict, and women have insinuated themselves into the military of many countries. Men no longer die for anyone but themselves, and chivalrous masculine sacrifice for domestic hearth and helpless women is the stuff now only of Bogart movies, Merchant/Ivory costume dramas and, irony of ironies, the year's most successful film, *Titanic*.

There is hardly anything that can be done that can't be done by a woman. So what, say women, not unreasonably given the age it has taken to establish such a state of affairs. So what indeed. The problem is one for men, and particularly for those men – and they have been the majority – who have defined their lives, their identities, the very essence of their masculinity in terms of work, and have prided themselves on the work that only they could do. Men's mess is compounded by the male inability, refusal or reluctance to engage in any serious analysis of the extraordinary impact that the industrial and scientific revolutions have had on their notions of masculinity.

And then there is the problem of men as husbands, men as fathers. The second millennium is ending with man's claim to a role in procreation, let alone a key role, under serious threat. The rise of single-parent families is a reflection of both male inadequacy and male redundancy. Increasingly, women are asserting that they can do it on their own. They don't need fathers for their children. The development of assisted reproduction, including techniques such as IVF, AID and surrogate motherhood, and the highly political and questionable argument that single parenting is as good as two parents, raise the question: whither the role of the father? Conception, pregnancy, delivery and child-rearing seemingly can be perfectly well accomplished without the active participation of the male. Once so proud of his penis (poor old Freud even believed women envied it), man now finds he has been reduced to the role of support seed-carrier as woman occupies centre-stage in the creation and nurturing of new life. Not surprisingly, there have been those who have seriously suggested that the only way men can regain a reproductive, a biological role of any significance is if they can be assisted by science to have babies themselves!

In a courageous piece, written earlier this year, Fay Weldon declared that women need men as partners and fathers, and that life without them isn't all that much fun for most women. It is a risky argument as it goes against the conventional feminist thesis concerning the redundancy of the male. But we men cannot depend on the Fay Weldons of this world to make our case. We have to make it ourselves. In *Anatomy of Desire*, his recently published, provocative and fair exploration of the nature of male and female sexuality, Simon Andreae concludes that for all the numerous alternative ways of arranging human sexual relationships, the union of one man and one woman, for better or worse, "is still as sensible and realistic a way of trying to optimise human relations and contributes to the greater happiness, peace and stability of mankind as any of the myriad alternatives". If he is right, and with regard to heterosexual men I believe he is, then I believe that within that perspective many men can begin to rediscover the point, purpose and satisfaction of being a male in the first place. A century ago, a peevish Freud, perplexed by the seeming epidemic of hysterical, depressed, lethargic and dissatisfied women, asked, "What do women want?". A century later, it is not women's wants but men's that mystifies us.

Dr Anthony Clare is currently writing a book on redefining masculinity, 'The Dying Phallus', for Chatto and Windus

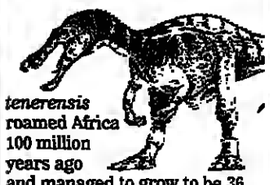
BAROMETER

SEAN O'GRADY

Homophobe of the Week
This week: Richard Littlejohn of *The Sun* (where europhobia meets homophobia) who says that "there is a homosexual freemasonry operating at the highest levels in politics, television and within the Royal household". No evidence for this, but, then again who needs it? If there were any, it wouldn't be a conspiracy would it? Mr Littlejohn is a skillful propagandist. During the war he would have made a good match

for Dr Goebbels, who was also fond of talking up a fictional conspiracy, the now unfashionable "international Jewish" variety, and who wasn't too enthusiastic about gay rights either. Perhaps homosexuals are plotting to get us into the European single currency. A pink pound perhaps, but the pink euro seems just a little far fetched.

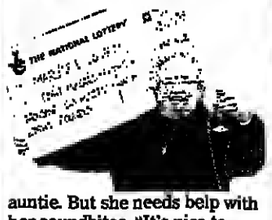
Dinosaur of the Week
Another ferocious predator with a gigantic mouth. Newly discovered *Suchomimus*



tenerensis roamed Africa 100 million years ago and managed to grow to be 36 feet long just by eating fish. Cod 'n' chips all round then.

Bustard of the Week
Feeling twitchy? Ornithological palate jaded by greater yellowlegs, blue-cheeked bee-eaters and black bellied dippers? Tired of the little bustard? Good news. The world's heaviest flying bird is back. No, not Monica Lewinsky but the great bustard. Hunters found *otis tarda* too big and unmissable a target and wiped them out 170 years ago. Which must have been a real ustard.

Winner of the Week
Mrs Marjorie Longdin, 73, of Rotherham, who has just won £856,648 on the National Lottery. Mrs Longdin has the distinction of being William Hague's auntie. Probably, by now, his favourite



auntie. But she needs help with her soundbites. "It's nice to know that my family is safe for life, especially when we're going into a recession." A recession, don't forget, Marjorie, made in Downing Street.

Image of the Week
The Venerable John Barton, the Archdeacon of Aston, Birmingham, modelling his new vestments. These feature modern imagery, including an aerial view of the our most famous motorway intersection. "God is in Spaghetti Junction," says the Archdeacon. Wondered where he'd got to.

COLD CALL

JACK O'SULLIVAN RINGS WILL MACDONALD

Boyish, bashful Will Macdonald

TUNE INTO Channel 4's cult show *TFI Friday*, and you will be bemused by the weird relationship that the brash Chris Evans has with his producer, Will Macdonald. This boyish, bashful Old Etonian is fast becoming a celebrity in his own right. But he plays stooge to Evans, submitting to ritual humiliation, be it dressing up for Evans in micro leather hot pants with red stilettos, allowing himself to be given a painful electric shock, or letting Evans slag off his ex-girlfriend in public.

Will likes us to think he is a cheerful chap, always up for high jinks. His new book, *How to Be a Pub Genius*, offers 50 tricks "guaranteed to wow babes and win beer". I am ringing him because I am worried. He doesn't seem very happy to me.

We start with his cleverest pub trick. "The best ones," he says, "are those that obey the basic laws of physics. For instance, did you know that if you fill a glass of water to the brim, you can still fit 50 five-pence pieces in it without spilling any water? It is all thanks to our old friend, the meniscus."

"The meniscus?"

"The circular edge of water held together by surface tension." Of course, I say, remembering that Will, for all his antics, is in fact a scientist with a zoology degree from Oxford University.

"You are really a pretty serious person, aren't you, Will?"

"You mean I'm not very funny?"

"No, it's just that you don't seem proud of being serious, and you cover it up with a smokescreen of silliness."

"I just don't want to disappear up my own arse."

"But it is more than that," I reply. "It is that whole English élite thing of working terribly hard to make life look effortless."

"No," he says. "I am reacting against being taught always to take myself seriously. I wanted to lighten up. I am saying that it is funny to be hit in the face by a five-pound berring and fall over.

"Otherwise, you can just disappear into your own gloom."

"Are you gloomy?

"No, not at all, but I have got elements of that," he says. "I am quite introverted compared with Chris. He says what he thinks, whereas I don't say things out loud. It is part of being southern. I wish I could let more out. Earlier on this year, I got a cyst on my vocal chords, which was put down to me not screaming out loudly."

"Will," I say, "why don't you stop trying so hard at being lightened up? You're all right. It's OK to be a serious person."

"But I don't feel I'm trying hard," he replies. "I couldn't have tried less hard writing this book. Everyone should be allowed to do what they want instead of people picking holes in it and telling them why they shouldn't do things. I agree I used to try too much but not anymore. I always tried to keep everybody happy, rather than telling people straight and pissing people off."

"So have you managed to lighten up enough yet?"

"I think I could lighten up a bit more. The main thing is to be happy. People get exasperated with overt seriousness."

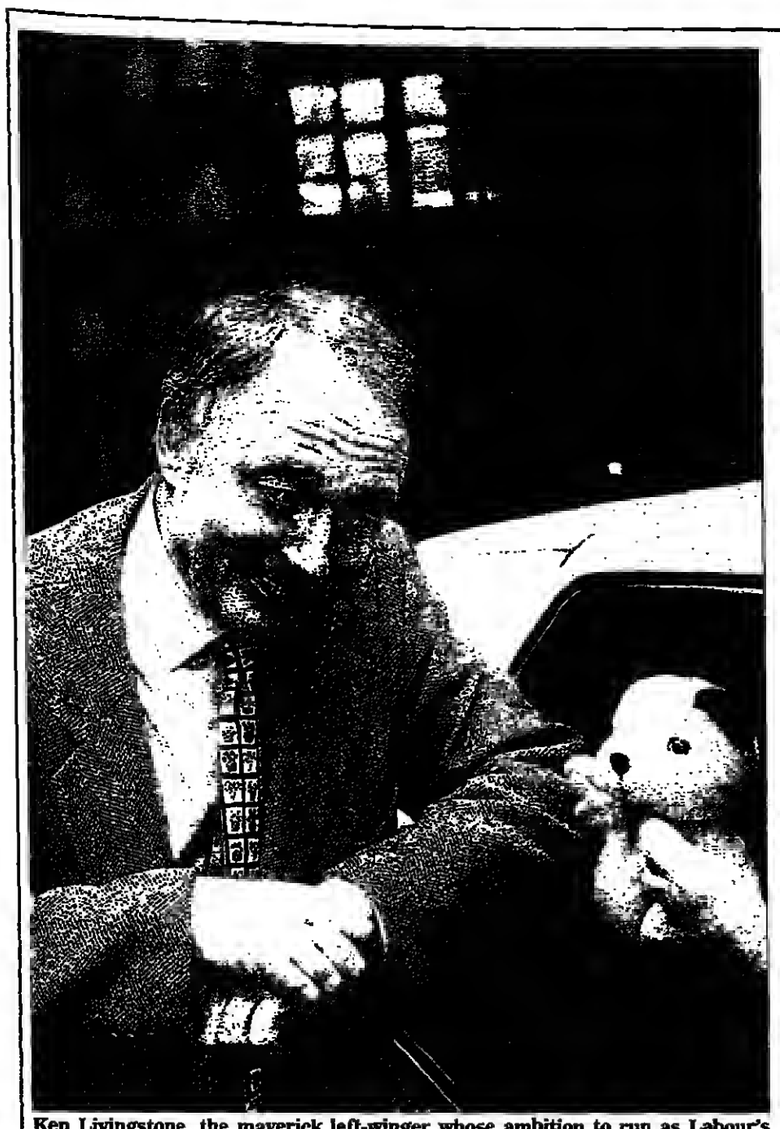
"Will," I say, "I can't work out whether you are getting there or singing in the dark?"

"I think I am getting there," he says. "But are you?"

We've reached an impasse, so I ask a final question. As a zoologist, which animal would he like to be?

"A male blackbird. He sings first thing in the morning. But it's a stupid time to sing because he is hungry. It's a show of strength. The ones who can sing the longest are obviously the fittest and the ones the females want.

"Make sense of that."



Ken Livingstone, the maverick left-winger whose ambition to run as Labour's candidate for London mayor is threatening to upset the Millbank apple-cart

Blair alters noble principle to read: one man, one veto

THE WEEK IN PARLIAMENT

MICHAEL BROWN

WHEN PADDY Ashdown gave his speech to his party conference, he asked a question of his new friend, Tony Blair: was the Prime Minister a control freak or a democrat?

This week saw the Prime Minister give his reply. Omov (one man, one vote), the great cause of the Labour right in recent years, was simplified down to one man, one veto.

In London, the Prime Minister dispatched his henchmen to block Ken Livingstone from running for London's mayor. Meanwhile, in Wales, the gloves came off as an exasperated Alun Michael failed to persuade Rhodri Morgan from standing down as candidate for the post of First Minister. Mr Michael and his cohorts are plumbing new depths in political chicanery by making the leadership campaign last indefinitely to burn off and arm-twist supporters of Mr Morgan.

Rather than making capital out of these Stalinist tendencies, William Hague seems to be catching the disease. In a fit of pique he phoned up Michael Portillo to slap him down for writing an article which forgot to mention Mr Hague's great leadership (an easy thing to forget). This will backfire. Mr Portillo has no official role in the Tory party and will make Mr Hague regret these attempts to limit his freedom to speak and write as he thinks fit.

WHILE PADDY Ashdown wallows in his glory as Tony's newest crony, the speculation mounted, in the corridors, as to what crumbs would drop from the cabinet table on to the Liberal Democrat mat. A tangible prize of patronage is being sought to placate their uneasy backbenchers. Certainly Alan Beith, the deputy leader who celebrates 25 years in Parliament this week, looked increasingly cheerful as his name was touted as the next Speaker.

Reaction in the Commons to the deal was scathing, however. Dennis Skinner was less than fraternal, reminding MPs that the last pact, in the 1970s, ended in tears when the Liberals ran away because "they couldn't stand the heat". Tony Benn wanted to know whether MPs could table questions to Paddy Ashdown, since the Liberal Democrat leader had more access to Downing Street than Labour backbenchers.

FRANK DOBSON'S office prides itself on its computer literacy, but the Millennium bug seemed to strike early in his department this week. First, a draft letter was sent to every Labour MP telling them to welcome the extra money he was giving to their local hospitals to reduce waiting lists. Trouble was, Mr Dobson was also sent the letter, telling him to fill out his name and congratulate himself on his fine decision.

Later, robotic electronic government left Mr Dobson speechless for over an hour. He was unable to make an emergency statement in the Commons on CJD because his department'a computers had crashed.

As he became increasingly frantic, Margaret Beckett stepped into the breach with her weekly business statement. A harassed government whip, Graham Allen, had to make Labour MPs ask questions to Mrs Beckett to delay proceedings until a hot and bothered Mr Dobson finally arrived.

Mr Dobson apologised and said the computer failure meant his statement could not be typed up. Perhaps they should keep an old-fashioned manual typewriter, or even a pen.

HOOLIGAN OF the week was the new Tory MP for South Holland and the Deepings, John Hayes, who lived up to the reputation he established at university – "You could have counted the people on campus more unpopular than myself on the fingers of a thalidomide's hand," he once said tastelessly.

Mr Hayes was so unruly during Prime Minister's Questions that he was threatened with expulsion from the Commons if he repeats it. Betty Boothroyd cautioned him with the worst tongue-lashing I've seen during her time as Speaker. It was splendid stuff.

A chastened Mr Hayes was already riding for a fall having tried, by innuendo, to embarrass Peter Mandelson in the wake of Nick Brown's "outing". Mr Mandelson was replying to a debate on factory closures when Mr Hayes interjected: "Would not the Right Honourable gentleman do better to emulate the Minister of Agriculture, who addressed the House in a mood of contrition and humility?"

He is the most recent in a line of Tories who have tried clumsily and unsuccessfully to cash in on Mr Mandelson's press difficulties. Chris Chope, for instance, had urged Mr Mandelson to study the pink paper – referring, of course, to the *Financial Times*, not the gay newspaper. And they wonder why they're not taken seriously as an opposition party.

IN MY new capacity as a Westminster elector I slipped in to the local Tories' public meeting entitled "Listening to Britain" held in a draughty church hall. And what a shambles it was.

A restless gathering of 80 members of the public (average age 65) waited for over half an hour before we were introduced to the crossbench peer Lord Marsh, the master of ceremonies. The chief listener, local MP Peter Brooke, arrived three-quarters of an hour late.

He didn't miss much, however. The first speaker was against automation and complained that modernisation would mean unemployment for paid domestic helps. Other Tories in the audience addressed the traditional issues: immigrants (too many); welfare state (too many scroungers); the homeless (it's their own fault); capital punishment (bring it back), etc.

It only hotted up when one speaker suggested there were too many BMWs outside the council blocks and that rents should be doubled. This provoked fury among the non-Tories in the audience. Those who weren't Conservatives were even less inclined to vote Tory by the end. One told me afterwards: "What a load of hull. When's Brooke retiring?"

Davies to be candidate for Welsh cabinet

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE FORMER minister Ron Davies is expected to announce that he still intends to stand as a candidate for the new Welsh Assembly next May.

In his first public engagement for more than 11 days, the Labour MP was due to tell local party members at a meeting last night that their strong support had persuaded him to fight on.

Mr Davies' supporters said yesterday that he was also likely to offer his constituency party in Caerphilly his own explanation of the incident on Clapham Common last month, which led him to quit the Cabinet. Addressing his local party for the first time since his resignation, he will try to correct media coverage of the "error of judgement" that led him to pick up a man before being robbed.

The new Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Michael, hinted this week that he would be prepared to include Mr Davies in his cabinet to run the assembly.

One of his colleagues said yesterday that he was determined to stand and play an influential role. "Ron has been immensely heartened by the response locally and wants to stand," he said. However, the Caerphilly constituency chairman, Derek Lamb, said that Mr Davies would be constrained in his answers by a pending court case connected to the episode.

Ron Davies: expected to stand for Welsh Assembly

A 38-year-old man is currently remanded in custody charged with robbing Mr Davies of his car and mobile phone.

Mr Lamb said that he expected most of the 60 members of the constituency's general management committee to attend the private meeting.

"Certain people I'm sure will ask questions but Ron has got to be very careful what he says. As far as he's able to answer he will and if he can't he will give the reason why."

Mr Davies had been due to address last Friday's weekly meeting but withdrew because "he was not in the best of health", Mr Lamb said.

He added that the constituency party had already expressed "absolute support" for Mr Davies but the MP wanted to meet members face to face.

Last week the media pressure on Mr Davies had become "intolerable", Mr Lamb said, but he spoke to him on the phone yesterday and he seemed "much stronger".

Mr Davies' only public appearance since his resignatioo as Secretary of State for Wales was to make a brief statement in the Commons, in which he attacked the press and appealed for a more tolerant society.

His resignation as prospective leader of the Welsh Assembly has triggered a bitter succession battle between Alun Michael, who replaced him at the Welsh Office, and Rhodri Morgan, who was defeated by Mr Davies in a party ballot earlier this year.

Yesterday the Welsh Labour Party's taskforce failed to produce concrete proposals for the new selection contest, but will meet next Thursday to announce its decision.

Bruno Brookes, 37, joins Trendy Tories

BY GARY FINN

THE FORMER Radio 1 DJ Bruno Brookes has become the latest "Trendy Tory" recruited by William Hague to revitalise the Conservative Party.

Brookes, who was culled by the BBC to make way for the new generation of DJs, has been chosen as a key member of Hague's Creative Forum, the think-tank charged with rebranding the party for the millennium.

The forum, which will advise on everything from the party logo to its "new millennial brand image", meets for the first time next week. Other members include the fashion designer Katharine Hamnett and James Bethell, the man behind London's Ministry of Sound nightclub.

Tony Blair has made great political capital out of attracting celebrity support for his "Cool Britannia" message, and the recruitment of so-called "Trendy Tories" is further evidence that Mr Hague is not prepared to cede that ground.

Brookes: His company staff were not surprised

Brookes, 37, boasts of being a millionaire and runs a growing media company that syndicates his shows to local radio such as Aire FM. Colleagues at the Leeds-based station said the move came as no surprise since "everyone knows Bruno is a Trendy Tory".

Brookes himself was reticent yesterday after being "outed" as a Tory and redirected callers to Conservative Central Office.

Tories hope his combination of business sense and media savvy will pay dividends. But whether he will supply the fresh approach demanded by Central Office remains to be seen. Last year, Brookes appeared in a billboard advert for Aire FM that was banned by the Advertising Standards Authority as "offensive, sexist and gratuitous". The poster showed a cigar-toting Brookes framed by the stockinged legs of his wife, Debbie.

Thirty-two years after the Moors murders, Hyde is stunned by another police investigation, now Europe's largest. By **Emma Cook**

The town with bad memories

Above, the scene of the exhumation in Hyde cemetery. Below left, Dr Shipman after his arrest, below right, Alice Kitchen's grave — *Jennie Robertson/Brian Williamson*

Apart from the two grim-faced gravediggers intently shovelling soil in the pouring rain, Hyde cemetery was all but deserted two weeks ago. Amid the rows of oeatly tended granite graves, though, three stood out from the rest. Flowers had been placed that morning beside the highly polished headstones, but they still looked conspicuous. The graves of Marie Quinn, Bianka Pomfret and Ivy Lomas – all patients of Dr Harold Shipman – were piled high with mounds of fresh black earth.

Though it was eerily quiet by early morning, the hours before must have been very different: police guards at the entrance of the cemetery, the rumble of a mechanical earth digger, a conceotrated focus of activity carried out under bright arc lights, with white tents raised over the graves.

This wasn't the first and may not be the last of these discreet early-morning operations. The first exhumation took place oo 1 August when the body of 82-year-old Kathleen Grundy was excavated. She had died in June, and Dr Shipman, 52, oow charged with murdering six of his patients, had given "old age" as a cause of death on her death certificate. Her family had then questioned a will, drawn up just before she died, that named Dr Shipman as the main beneficiary. At that point detectives said that they might be looking into the deaths of as many as 28 patients.

The number of cases under investigatioo then spiralled rapidly. Police indicated that the inquiry would cover 90 deaths, but in the last four weeks that figure has been reported as 116. This week the bodies of three more women have been exhumed: Irene Turner, 67, on Tuesday; Alice Kitchen, 70, on Wednesday; and Jean Lilley, 58, on Thursday.

The sheer scale of the investigation has left the small town of Hyde reeling, not to mention the police. As a spokesman for Greater Manchester Police said while trying to clarify the chronology of this week's activities, "We're getting a bit confused this end... I don't think any police force has had to deal with anything of this nature before."

Initially it was described as the largest investigation of its type in Britain. Now it's commonly reported as Europe's biggest murder inquiry. Not a particularly enviable claim to fame for the market town already described as an S-bend with chip shops. Except that this isn't the first time residents of Hyde have endured the media glare. Thirty-two years ago, the world's press were focused on Hyde's magistrates' court, with its panelled walls and white, domed ceiling: the committal proceedings were held here against Ian Brady and Myra Hindley.

As you wander around the streets of red-brick terraced houses, it's hard to forget the proximity of the couples' crimes. Look above the roofs and there are the moors, stark and strikingly green, dominating the horizon. Settled in its shadow is Hyde's small town centre, and a soulless shopping centre with Halford's, Kwik Save and discount carpet shops. It has a population of around 35,000, and it's hard to imagine how younger people spend their time here, and harder still to believe that Manchester's lively student areas, such as Chorlton and Didsbury, are only 15-20 minutes away.

The concrete rows of shops seem to cater for a distinctly ageing population: Age Concern, Clippets, a dog grooming "salon", numerous dental and medical practices. There's no cinema, and the few pubs, like everywhere else in the town, appear to attract a much older crowd. In the town centre residents seem muted and the atmosphere is gloomy.

On the one hand residents are clearly jaded by recent events and the ensuing media attention; on the other they find it hard to think of anything else – especially when their local cemetery is the focus of so much nocturnal activity.

John Bell, a councillor, says, "My initial reaction was one of shock when they dug up the first grave. We knew that something untoward was going on – people had seen the arc lights late at night – then we found out about it in the press."

What has really irritated Bell lately is the negative image so often given by the press. Words such as "grim" and "bleak" have begun to irk him – especially, he says, because they're so ofteo penned by southerners. "Hyde is often described in an appalling way. We're proud of the market town and the people here are strong enough to sustain anything that's thrown at them."

It's what isn't thrown at them that make the experience so frustrating, though; residents have lived among the activities of recent weeks in a state of virtual ignorance. Like everyone else, they glean their information from the media. Police say they are unable to keep people informed as they are bound by the rules of *sub judice*, so many people in Hyde seem to have even more questions than the press who pursue them. "Why here? How long will it go on? Is it only women patients?"

"It's so upsetting not knowing what's going to happen", says 75-year-old Alice Lawrence, shopping in the market square. One of her friends used to be a patient in Dr Shipman's surgery. "You don't hear a bad word about him round here."

"He was so well liked by patients," adds Bell later. "Everyone revered him; for his attention to detail, the way he talked to people and remembered things. Some of his patients still don't believe this is happening."

Outside Age Concern, opposite Dr Shipman's surgery, which is open for business as usual, Ivy Teale, 68, voices a widely felt grievance. "It's the oot being told anything new that's the worst," she says. "Nobody bothers to tell you anything – you have to see it on the telly. You just wonder how long it can all go on for," she adds gloomily.

"So many people are worried. So many questions are being raised about their relatives. There's so much anxiety and stress", says Father Denis Mahern, of St Paul's Church, who was close friends with Kathleen Grundy. "Lots of people are sharing their doubts with me. There's nothing worse than having doubts and questions that can't be answered. It's going to cause a lot of long-term problems. People feel guilty about what's happening."

Hyde, he says, is an unusually tight-knit community, and one that treats outsiders with suspicion. "We recently had a funeral for a 76-year-old woman and the church was full. They turn out for things like that round here. There's great support. Very few people here wouldn't be connected to each other by blood or marriage. If you hurt one, you hurt a hundred."

Father Denis also worries that other past associations will inevitably resurface. "The Moors murders are always in people's minds. But they were just getting over that. This may bring it up again."

Mr Bell agrees. "It's one of the great tragedies – everyone associates this place with those awful deeds, but they shouldn't."

In The Wheatsheaf pub, though, it's pretty clear which case still lingers in the town's psyche – or, at least, it does for now. Pete Matthews, who works for the council, says, "It's just strange after 30 years that everyone's interested in us again. But ask anyone in this pub and they'll say more about the Moors murderers. What they did to those kids must be worse than anything that may have happened since.

"They came to that Town Hall over there," he says, pointing in the direction of the magistrates' court. "That's what we remember still."

Whether those memories are about to be overshadowed, we'll know sooo enough.

(Some names have been changed at interviewees' request)

High-anxiety parenting

PARK LIFE

BRUCE MILLAR

IT WAS our son Tom's 11th birthday and, within reason, he could choose whatever treat he liked. So it came about that the four of us, plus three of Tom's friends, slogged up Everest and down again last Sunday, after a large Chinese meal, in a special-effects cinema which made you feel you were really there – a sort of 3D without the silly glasses.

This was not the ideal wet weekend fare for someone terrified of heights, such as myself. Early on in the film, while tracing the climbers' training sessions, the combination of trick photography and special effects sent us viewers flying off a track along the edge of a canyon in Idaho, then left us dangling from a sheer rock-face hundreds of feet above the churning sea, then hurtling down a bottomless crevasse in the foothills of the Himalayas.

A good deal of the enjoyment for Tom and his friends, whom he had briefed in advance on my delicate condition, was to watch my appalled reaction to these head-spinning aerial sequences, and the urgent whisper of "Look at Dad" that trickled along the row was all that kept my composure.

Likewise, Tom was hugely amused at his mother's tears when the inevitable tragedy struck – in this case, we eavesdropped on a climber trapped in a storm near the summit, talking by radio with his seven-months-pregnant wife at home in New Zealand a couple of hours before certain death. Oh, the maudlin sentimentality of adults: tough 11-year-olds cry only at really important things, such as not being allowed to watch *Top of the Pops*.

But I cannot believe Tom chose this treat only to torture his parents. Perhaps – and this is even worse – mountain-climbing is in his blood or his genes or whatever it is that transmits these tastes in a family.

If so, it has skipped a generation. My mother and father may not have in fact met on a mountain-top, but they certainly spent as much time as possible up mountains in their early years together. I vividly remember them departing on what they had announced would be their last ever climbing trip, shortly before my second sister was born: leaving two orphans, the logic went, would be regrettable; three orphans was irresponsible.

They were right to stop, of course, because the odds are stacked against mountaineers surviving for long. Every year or so, my father would come home with grim news: "Tony was killed last week. A rock fall on the Zugspitz – he did not stand a chance. They have four children".

But even after they had reluctantly given up climbing, my parents would regale us with tales from the mountains, which must have come to represent a golden age of youthful freedom to them. There was the fellow climber who could down pints of beer all night and then power up vertical cliffs all day, fuelled only by fruit-and-nut bars; another who lost all his fingers and toes to frostbite, but carried oo climbing regardless.

My father, who once took 18 months to put up a simple shelf for the telephone, accomplished in one weekend the far more complicated task of building a lookout platform for me in our conker tree, when I was about eight. I do not remember having to nag him to put it up; in fact I think the impetus came from him, quite unbidden. Whether or not he meant to introduce me to the thrill of heights in this way, the experiment ultimately failed.

Not straightaway, though: I climbed trees quite happily as a child, and did not even particularly worry when I fell out a couple of times. But at some stage in that complicated period known as adolescence, I became convinced that I suffered from vertigo.

I do not know whether its origin was neurotic, or whether the climbing gene inherited from my parents was overwhelmed by a late-developing heights-are-terrifying gene picked up from some earlier ancestor, but the conviction has never left me. My first and only business partnership – as a window-cleaner, one summer holiday when I was 17 – broke up after only a week over my point-blank refusal to climb a ladder and administer to upstairs panes.

Since then, I have made an exhibition of myself at the top of tall buildings including St Paul's Cathedral, the Eiffel Tower and the Empire State Building, hugging a wall or even lying on the floor in a state of frenzied fear.

But I have never been near the top of a mountain, and I hope that Tom stays well clear of them, too. If he shows signs of mountain-lust as he gets older, I will just have to buy him a motorbike to encourage him to court danger in a safer manner.

MY WEEK

SEVEN DAYS IN THE LIFE OF ADRIAN WOOTTON, THE DIRECTOR OF THE LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Saturday
My day was spent with Roberto Benigni, a wild and wonderful Italian comedian and director. On stage he said he was tremendously honoured and so excited to be there that he wanted to kiss every member of the audience on the mouth and take all his clothes off. I managed to dissuade him.

Sunday
Every day during the festival we have a meeting at 10am when we work out all the logistics of the day. It doesn't matter how late you were out the previous night – you have to be there. At 6pm there was a presentation of the *The Importance of Being Earnest* archive restoration; Michael Redgrave's widow, Rachel Kempson, came with their daughter Vanessa, as well as Dorothy Tutin, the only surviving member of the original cast. After they were whizzed off to have a drink, I welcomed Willem Dafoe and did an interview with him on stage. We all ended up at The Ivy for a very late dinner.

Monday
Terry Gilliam, the director of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, got in from New York and we were waiting to hear if Johnny Depp could make it – he couldn't. I welcomed Terry, then shipped him off to a big festival dinner. I went back to the *Fear and Loathing* party at the Atlantic Bar & Grill, which ended at some point or other.

Tuesday
I met Jonathan Demme and the star of *Storefront Hitchcock*, the musician Robyn Hitchcock, at the NFT. I packed Jonathan off to his hotel and jumped in a cab to go to the gala screening of *The Nephews*. I had to make an appearance at the party afterwards to keep the sponsors happy, though my body is craving sleep. I made the mistake last year of going to my hotel room to lie down for 20 minutes and nearly slept through an interview I was supposed to be doing on stage. I'm not doing that this year.

Wednesday
The British gala performance of *Waking Ned*. All the parties and receptions blur into one after a bit, though I doo't drink – I'd never be able to be articulate to sponsors. They only way I survive is oo coffee and cigarettes.

Thursday
The young American star Matt Damon will be arriving tomorrow, so we had to deal with all the private jets and security arrangements. Meanwhile I flew from screening to screening with different people. Then I had to take a bunch of people to dinner. Forty minutes later I rushed back for another Q&A. I rarely eat a full meal during the festival. I usually end up having a few bits of bread and some canapés in the evening.

Friday
Matt Damon Day started early at 9.30am. Now we have to worry about things like security barriers and which cars to allow into Leicester Square. I've still got screenings to introduce and Q&As to do before changing into my tuxedo. There's also a wild party going on in St Martin's Crypt tonight which I think will be quite a contrast to our elegant gala. I'll just be glad when it's 8.30pm and Matt Damon's on stage.

INTERVIEW BY GLENDA COOPER

The London Film Festival is in its 42nd year, showing 150 features from around the world

Tommy Flowers

TOMMY FLOWERS'S contribution to codebreaking in the Second World War was immense. He led the team that designed and built Colossus – the first electronic programmable computer – to break the complex encoded communiqués between the German High Command and the field. The first model was demonstrated at Bletchley Park, the British forces' Intelligence Centre, in December 1943, with a faster version in operation by June 1944, days before D Day. Historians believe that the codebreaking facilitated by Colossus shortened the war by two years.

As the war progressed and the volume of enemy encrypted radio intercepts increased, it became evident that the manual method then in use for deciphering this material was woefully inadequate. The Post Office Engineering Department at Dollis Hill in London was involved in many different projects designed to further the war effort, and an approach was made by Bletchley Park for assistance in devising equipment to speed up the decryption process.

Flowers had joined the staff at the Research Station at Dollis Hill in the mid-1930s. A team-player with unconventional technical ideas, he had established himself as a man of considerable foresight in the field of telephone exchange switching design, and was asked to find an answer to this problem. He devised a machine, called a "Robinson" (as he described it later, it was "a Heath Robinson affair held together with string and sealing wax").

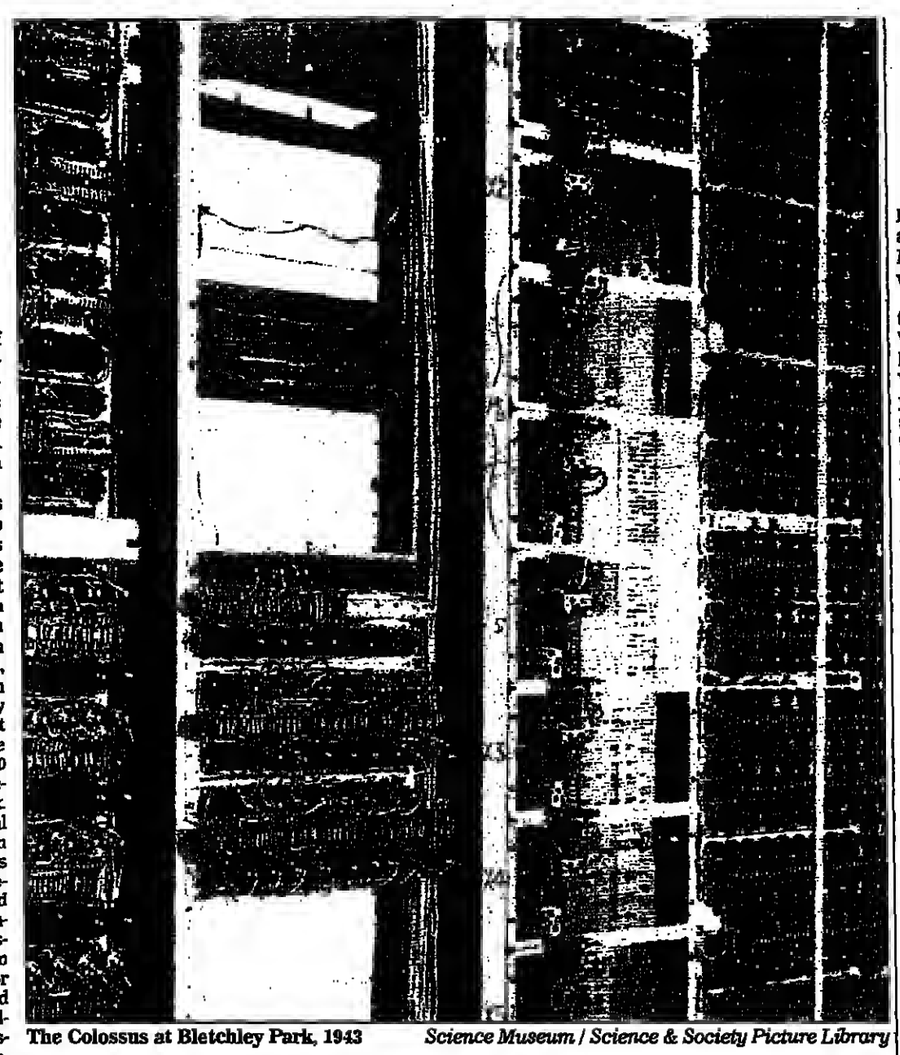
Belated recognition

The use of thermionic valves was felt by many of those concerned to be a weak point in the design of this kind of machine. Flowers made the revolutionary claim that a valve left on all the time, and not switched on and off as required, would have a very long life. The Staff Engineer in charge at DH had faith in Flowers, and backed him. A small design team was formed in great secrecy to work on the first and subsequent machines, the last of which were the 10 Colossus machines, having 2,500 valves apiece, which were so successfully employed at Bletchley Park.

Colossus was designed to deal with the complex intelligence known as Fish, with messages sometimes 10,000 characters in length sent between Hitler's High Command and commanders in the field, and containing vital information on troop dispositions, ration strengths, and even details of leave arrangements for generals. The Morse-transmitted Enigma code, on the other hand, although very complex, used messages of a purely tactical nature, which were never more than 250 characters long. This work had no association with Colossus.

Colossus was engaged on the statistical analysis of the enemy teleprinter intercepts. A separate machine to use this data to decipher each message was needed, and Flowers arranged for me, a former member of the DH staff, then in the Army in North Africa engaged on another DH-backed project, to be posted home to join his team. Busy though he was, Flowers made a daily visit to his small band working in a small laboratory to observe progress.

The new machines, codenamed "Tunny", were to be fed with an enciphered message tape, and after being set up according to the Colossus data, were to produce a printed output on a teleprinter in clear German. To facilitate the testing of Tunny, one of the design engineers devised a certain set of code wheel patterns, and on his next visit Flowers was invited to type in the message "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party". His delight at seeing the machine print out "I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o'er vales and hills" was reward enough for the small band, who like Flowers, did a 12- or 14-hour day without complaint.



The Colossus at Bletchley Park, 1943 *Science Museum / Science & Society Picture Library*

Born in the East End of London in 1905, Flowers gained a scholarship to technical college, enabling him to stay on until 16. He served a four-year mechanical apprenticeship at the Royal Arsenal in Woolwich, gained a London University degree in Engineering through evening classes, and then joined the Post Office as an electrical engineer in 1926, aged 20. Besides his involvement with electronic telephone transmissions, he also did sterling work in the forward line of the DH hockey team in the immediate pre-war years. After the war, he continued his work at Dollis Hill, applying his expertise of electronics to telephone switching and signalling systems.

He was appointed MBE for his contribution to the war effort along with a rather meagre £1,000 award, but, since the codebreaking activities at Bletchley Park were kept secret for 30 years, Flowers remained largely unknown to the public. Only later did his work receive recognition – he was presented with an honorary doctorate from Newcastle University in 1977, and another in 1993 from De Montfort University in Leicester. A reconstruction of Colossus is now on view at the Bletchley Park museum.

G. O. HAYWARD

Thomas Harold Flowers, engineer: born London 22 December 1905; MBE 1943; married 1935 Eileen Green (two sons); died London 28 October 1998.

Abdoulaye Ndiaye

IN FRANCE, as in Britain, the 80th anniversary of the Armistice of 11 November 1918 was celebrated with a particular emotion.

It was clear that the number of those who had served in the First World War and who were still alive had been dramatically reduced. Would there be anyone still alive next year? Therefore a number of former soldiers, of whom the youngest was 98 and the oldest was 107, were decorated with the Légion d'Honneur by the tomb of the unknown soldier at the Arc de Triomphe.

But, in addition, one soldier was to receive the same decoration in his home village in Africa. Abdoulaye Ndiaye, aged 104 (or 109, by his own report) was to be honoured by the French ambassador in Dakar, who would make his way to Thiovor, with its 1500 inhabitants, on 11 November. But the day before, as he was choosing the tunic that he would wear, the last of the Senegalese riflemen collapsed and died.

This death has aroused much emotion in France, not only because of the particular circumstances in which it took place, but because there was a real interest in recalling the role that troops from overseas France played in the First World War (and subsequently in the second). It has been said that 180,000 troops were mobilised who came from French West Africa and that 25,000 of them perished. But because these figures were small, compared with the numbers of Frenchmen who served in the army and compared with the terrible numbers of Frenchmen who were killed, they have invariably been overlooked.

It was General Charles Mangin who, in his 1910 book *La Force Noire*, sought to supplement the demographic weakness of France by calling upon the manpower reserves of the French colonial empire. In 1915 he spoke of an army of half a million men coming from West Africa and Indo-China. The case of Abdoulaye Ndiaye shows that events did not follow such grand aspirations.

His earliest memories of the French, as he told the journalists who visited him, were of traders who bought ground-nut oil and of soldiers who protected the Africans from the "Moors" who sought to enslave them. Then, one day, the French military arrived in the village and said that because France had brought the benefits of civilisation, they must in return protect France against her enemies.

Apparently certain individuals were forced to volunteer. But a cousin of Ndiaye refused and went into hiding. Consequently, his father, Ndiaye's uncle, was imprisoned. But he was of noble caste and Ndiaye felt obliged to volunteer in order that he should be released. Hence he found himself, along with 10 others from the village, undergoing medical tests in Louga, travelling from Dakar to Morocco, and from there to Marseilles.

During this time he received instruction in the French language, which was all the more necessary since the West African contingent did not all speak the same language. He was also given an elementary military training. All this must have been very rapid, since his military record, as documented in the archives, show him as being on the front in Belgium, where he was wounded, in August 1914. (The order for general mobilisation was issued in Paris on the afternoon of Saturday 1 August, and the German declaration of war on France was 3 August.)

We know that he spent some time in hospital after this wound and we know that he always carried the scars on the top of his head. But, as he was also wounded on the Somme in July 1916 it is not clear what experience followed which wounding.

He appears to have seen much of the war. In addition to fighting on the Northern Front in 1915 he took part in the Dardanelles expedition. Britain and France had declared war on the Ottoman Empire in November 1914 but the French High Command had been reluctant to take troops away from the vital Western Front and had only consented to send a contingent made up of Foreign Legionnaires, troops who had been in depots and Senegalese.

Ndiaye remembered catching a glimpse of Istanbul in the mist, but as a Muslim, he remembered particularly that the French commander thought that he would surprise the enemy by attacking on a Friday, the day of prayer. He remembered that he and some of his companions wept because they did not want to make war against fellow Muslims.

He had no feelings about the Germans. He knew nothing about them except that they were very cunning and that they wanted to kill him. He was young and strong. He recalled breaking a German soldier's legs before making him prisoner. He found two Germans hiding in a shell hole and threw his grenade at them. He never thought of disobeying orders but he was thinking of his uncle back in Thiowor. If he were to desert that would bring shame on him.

He met many French people, since, apart from his stays in hospital, he and other African troops were moved south during the winter, and he seems to have spent some time in Saint Raphaël. There were French people who had never seen anyone as black as him, and they asked if it was the sun that had made him thus, "or was it the work of God?" French women, he claimed, gave him food and some of them wanted to make love with him, but he refused.

After the Dardanelles he fought on the Somme, at Verdun in 1917 and again in 1918. He was made a corporal. After the armistice he was given the Croix de Guerre and asked to re-enlist. But, according to one French journalist, he wanted to get back to his mother, his brother and his camel. He lived the rest of his days in Thiowor.

In many ways he was like any old soldier, talking about "14 to 18", remembering his old army number (14576), recalling the discomforture of the trenches. Perhaps he did not know how rare it was for the French to recognise the role of the troops from *l'Afrique Noire*. It was not until May 1983 that a movement acknowledged "the memory of the Senegalese soldiers who died in the battle of the Chemin des Dames".

Ndiaye did discover that a war pension was due to him as a soldier who had been wounded. This was in 1949. He received from that date a regular monthly pension which was much less that that received by men of French nationality. But it kept his family, some 30 people in all, in their primitive comfort. He also received the right to travel on French railways at a reduced rate.

DOUGLAS JOHNSON

Abdoulaye Ndiaye, soldier: born Thiovor, Senegal 1894; married; died Thiovor 10 November 1998.

Nina Youshkevitch

THE RESPECTED New York City-based ballet teacher Nina Youshkevitch was a rare remaining direct link with the legacy of the great choreographer Bronislava Nijinska. She was a protégée of Nijinska both as dancer and as teacher.

In recent times, Nijinska's daughter and heir, Irina Nijinska, encouraged Youshkevitch to reconstruct lost Nijinska ballets in which Youshkevitch had danced. Both were eager to bring to light the breadth of Nijinska's contributions beyond the best-known works, *Les Biches* and *Les Noces*. Starting in 1990, working from memory and the methodical Nijinska's notations, Youshkevitch staged Ravel's *Bolero* (the original ballet made for Ida Rubinstein in 1928), the poetic abstract *Chopin Concerto*, and the Bride's solo in the Stravinsky *Le Baiser de la Fée*, and was prepared to do more.

The daughter of the distinguished playwright and novelist Semyon Youshkevitch, she left Russia with her family in 1921. They settled in Paris, where from the age of seven she studied ballet under leading teachers of the time, Olga Preobrajenska, Lubov Egorova, and Léo Staats. She also graduated from the Conservatoire de Paris with a first prize in piano. She was chosen by Nijinska from the age of 10 for her companies, dancing such roles as La Garçonne in *Les Biches* and the Bride in *Le Baiser de la Fée*.

On a tour by a second Colonel de Basil company to Australia and New Zealand in 1936-37, she was befriended by the British dance writer Arnold Haskell, who chronicled the tour in *Dancing Around the World* (1937), singling her out among the younger dancers as a true ballerina, with her sense of the grand manner and her musicality. With an equally young Igor Youskevitch (no relation) she danced Aurora, Odette, and the Princess in Nijinska's sophisticated fairy tale *The Hundred Kisses*.

Youshkevitch then joined Nijinska at the Polish Ballet as prima ballerina. The ballets made for her included *Chopin Concerto*, which called on her virtuoso turning ability for expressive purposes and won the Paris Choreographic Prize. She danced in the ballet at Covent Garden.

Youshkevitch emigrated to the United States in 1940, where she became ballerina of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet and danced Aurora in the first full-length *Sleeping Beauty* in the US in 1945, in San Francisco.

In 1947, she began teaching in Nijinska's studio in Hollywood. She started her own company in 1952, choreographed for television, and taught highly regarded classes in New York from 1977 until June this year. Her students included the rising young Jennie Somogyi of the New York City Ballet.

Youshkevitch's first reconstruction of Nijinska's work was the Bride's solo from *Le Baiser de la Fée* in 1990. She staged *Bolero* in 1995 for the Oakland (California) Ballet, and was to restage it at La Scala, Milan, for an Ida Rubinstein evening in 1999. *Chopin Concerto* came next in 1995-96 for Goucher College in Maryland, and the second movement for Oakland Ballet in 1997, with the complete ballet planned to follow in 1999.

It is to be hoped that the legacy of Nijinska will be carried on, in spite of the death of Irina Nijinska in 1991 and of the soft-spoken, regal, and dedicated Nina Youshkevitch, who liked to say, "Nijinska was absolutely amazing because she had so many ballets, and no two look alike."

MARILYN HUNT

Nina Youshkevitch, ballet dancer and teacher, born Odessa, Russia 7 December 1920; married Robert Johnson (one son); died New York 3 November 1998.

Youshkevitch in *Swan Lake*: a drawing by Daryl Lindsay

Margaret Keay

ALTHOUGH HER speciality was plant pathology, the diseases of field crops, Margaret Keay contributed extensively to the development of emergent educational institutions in Africa. Throughout the several phases of her career, she held the causes of equal opportunity, black and white, male and female, dear to her heart.

Born in South Africa in 1911, she spent much of her working life in Africa. She was an only child born of Scottish parents in Pretoria and, as she recalled, ran free in the bush from a house behind the Parliament building there. It was not a house of luxury, even though her father was Under-Secretary for Justice in the then Union of South Africa, but a strict, religious home. Her birthday celebrations consisted of a birthday tea and being told that a sum of money had been sent to the local orphanage.

She went away to secondary school at the Collegiate School for Girls in Port Elizabeth, a long journey alone on the train. In later years she had difficulty coping with people who were always late. You see, she would say, they were not brought up to the fact that, if they missed the train, it would be three days before there was another.

It seems as if Margaret Keay long had an eye on Cambridge, for she had discovered that Cape Town degrees were recognised by Cambridge University. At Cape Town she was taught by women members of staff who had been to Cambridge, so she knew that if she was to successfully complete a higher degree there she would only be awarded the title of the degree. Undaunted, she completed a degree in Botany, then a Secondary Teachers Certificate (with distinction), before arriving at Newnham College in 1934 to work in the then Botany School as a research student under Professor F.T. Brooks in Mycology and Plant Pathology.

The Botany School had fewer than a dozen research students at that time so they were a close-knit community. Newnham had strict ideas about how its members should conduct themselves – they even had to pass a punting proficiency test on the Upper Cam before being allowed to punt along the Backs.

Her first post was as Research Assistant in the Department of Agricultural Biology at Reading University; later promoted to lecturer in 1943. Reading was followed by a time in Norfolk, researching diseases of flax, at that time an important constituent of parachute harnesses. At the end of the Second World War she returned to Cambridge to work with the then Commonwealth Potato Collection which was attached to the School of Agriculture of the university. Britain was in the gloomy period of the post-war depression and rationing, and indeed bread rationing was still in force. Keay would sometimes appear at my mother-in-law's door with one or two potatoes surplus to experimental requirements.

'Just off to change before your lecture?'

During this time, Keay joined a pressure group, based on the Women Graduates Club, calling for the foundation of a third college for women at the university (Girton and Newnham were the only colleges open to women). It was a source of considerable satisfaction to her that first New Hall and later, Lucy Cavendish, came into being.

In 1954 she was appointed to Makerere College at Kampala, Uganda (later redesignated Makerere University College as part of the University of East Africa and now Makerere University), as Reader in Agricultural Botany in the newly founded Faculty of Agriculture. Makerere was a challenge as it upgraded itself, first to a constituent college of London University, then as one of the three components of the University of East Africa. Keay was appointed Head of the new Department of Agricultural Biology after just six years.

She was no push-over, requiring to be convinced by reasoned argument and accurately estimated costs when her staff put forward proposals for teaching or research. Her famous duplicate book was in evidence here. For every note she wrote on departmental matters there was a dated carbon copy. No use saying that you did not know this or that, she had the evidence to prove otherwise.

She also expected good standards of dress and behaviour. Passing a colleague in the corridor whom she perceived to be inappropriately dressed, she enquired, "Just off to change before your lecture?" For men, a tie (even with short-sleeved shirts) and properly cut and laundered shorts (with knee-length stockings) were *de rigueur*.

She was a very effective lecturer and teacher, giving degree courses in plant systematics and morphology, climatology, lower plants and micro-organisms as well as plant pathology and the botany of East African crop plants.

She was elected to the College Council, and served as Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture for the academic year 1962-63. She was Convenor of the Scholarships Committee of the Uganda Association of University Women and was closely associated with the establishment of the bursary fund for the secondary education of girls in Uganda, as well as being a member of the Uganda Foundation for the Blind.

After 10 years at Makerere, and knowing that her academic progress there was blocked, she moved to Northern Nigeria as Senior Plant Pathologist in the Institute for Agricultural Research and Special Services at Ahmadu Bello University. Her section was responsible for research and specialist advisory work on plant disease problems in the Northern States. Her teaching and administrative abilities were quickly recognised by her appointment in 1968 to the Chair and Headship of a newly established Department of Crop Protection.

Nigeria was unsettled at this time and frequent road blocks were encountered whilst travelling. While driving to the Jos Plateau to collect examination materials, she was stopped at a road block, the car and her luggage thoroughly searched. On her return journey, she was stopped at the same place by the same soldiers. She offered to open her suitcase – "No need, Madam, we know the colour of your slippers."

On retirement from Ahmadu Bello University in 1971, aged 60, she was awarded a Resettlement Fellowship by the Inter-University Council for Higher Education Overseas tenable at Wye College, in Kent, part of London University. A year later, Margaret Keay was appointed Academic Assistant to the Principal and Dean of Women Students at Wye College. She retired in 1976, having been made an honorary life member of Wye College Union Society.

From August 1976, she was offered "desk space" in the Department of Applied Biology at Cambridge, where she remained in association with a wide range of biologists working on post-harvest biology problems, until it closed in September 1989.

Retirement did not stop a continuous stream of visitors beating a path to her door for discussion, academic debate, advice or a friendly chat. Her visitors were of all ages, for one of her great attributes was a lifelong interest in "the young". She had an imposing presence and a strong voice, which frightened more than just young children.

It was a fitting memorial that at her funeral service the benediction included the following from a card above her desk: "Learn widely, Inquire minutely. Think carefully, Discuss clearly, AND Practise earnestly" (Confucius, 551-479 BC).

WILLIAM BLOCK

Margaret Agnes Keay, plant pathologist: born Pretoria, South Africa 11 June 1911; Reader in Agricultural Botany, Makerere College, Kampala (later Makerere University College) 1954-61, Head of Department 1960-64, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture 1962-63; Senior Plant Pathologist, Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University 1964-68, Professor, and Head of the Department of Crop Protection 1968-71; OBE 1972; Academic Assistant to the Principal, and Dean of Women Students, Wye College 1972-76; Associate, Newnham College, Cambridge 1974-98; died Cambridge 26 October 1998.

هكذا من الاصل

Gerald Long

GERALD LONG spent almost all of his working life with Reuters, the old-established news and information agency. He became known first as a capable journalist, and later as a creative if temperamental manager.

He was appointed general manager of Reuters at the age of only 39 in 1963; he left in 1981. During those 18 years the agency was transformed from a business in slow decline into one of great success and profitability. How much (or little) credit for this revolution should be given to Long personally remains a matter of dispute, especially among those who worked under him at Reuters.

Long was born at York in 1922, the son of a postman. He was educated at St Peter's School, York, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he read Modern Languages, taking a First in Part I of the Tripos. While serving as an officer in the Intelligence Corps in post-war Germany, he became involved in setting up newspapers under British military control. In 1948 he joined Reuters as one of its first graduate trainees. Long spoke both French and German like a native; and he possessed a rare, because equal, admiration for French and German literature, music, art and – not least – food and drink.

After spells as a Reuter correspondent in Paris and Ankara, in 1956 he was appointed chief representative in Germany. In 1959 his journalistic skills led to his being temporarily transferred back to Paris to reinforce the coverage by Reuters of one of the most dramatic post-war news stories, the stately return to power of General de Gaulle. In 1960 Long became assistant general manager for Europe, based in London.

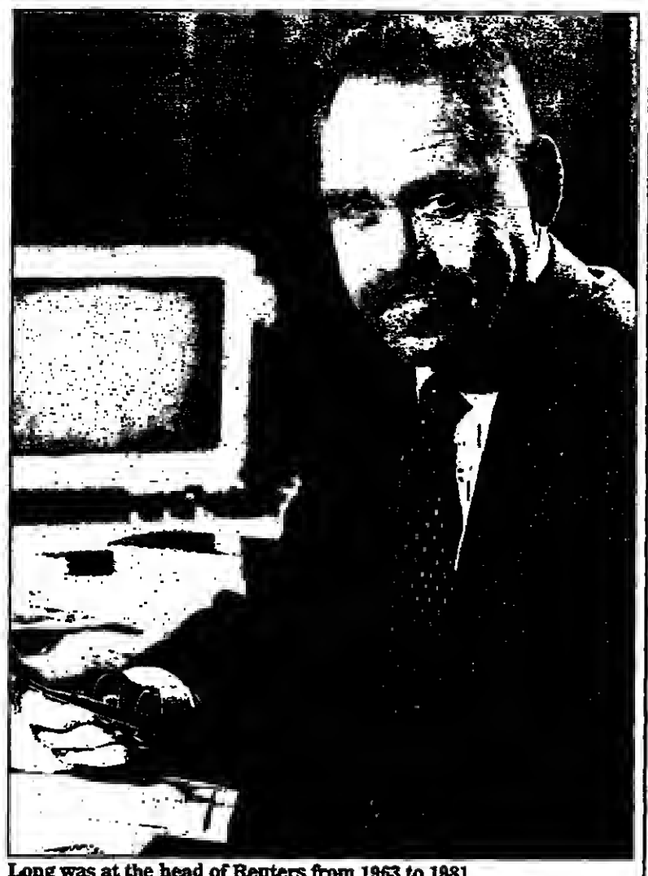
Gerry Loog's personality was intriguing. His mind was subtle, but not his manner. He had a Yorkshire forthrightness, which many took for brusqueness, sometimes correctly. Yet he could be engaging. His face provided a striking canvas for either humour. His hair was short-cropped, his eye steady, his gesture firm, his voice slow but decisive.

All found themselves at odds with him sooner or later, even his protégés. The answer was not to let him slip into bullying. He enjoyed free-wheeling discussion (time-wasting, said his critics), and he might accept contradiction if it was well-informed and obviously for the good of Reuters. His concern for the old agency was undoubted, and his knowledge of its history considerable. From 1963 he set out to make Reuters into an aggressive and profitable organisation, such as it had been in Julius Reuter's prime a century earlier. "I felt I had much in common with him."

To introduce the necessary novel products and services Reuters needed fresh capital. Long persuaded a reluctant board to borrow heavily. In 1967 the long-standing but inappropriate dependence of Reuters upon two US news suppliers – AP and Dow Jones – for much American general o ews and economic information was at last ended. This was a financially risky but essential initiative if Reuters was to become a truly independent and global news provider. Long forced the proposal through the Reuter board.

In the next year the handling of general news by Reuters in its London newsroom was modernised by the introduction of a computerised message switching system. Even more revolutionary was the introduction during the 1960s and 1970s by Reuters Economic Services of a successioo of computerised electronic products for world financial markets.

His mind was subtle, but not his manner. Many took his Yorkshire forthrightness for brusqueness – sometimes correctly



Long was at the head of Reuters from 1963 to 1981

For this breakthrough, however, Long must share the credit with others. These innovative products were found or devised by various young managers within RES, especially Michael Nelsoo and Glen Renfrew. Long's contribution was, first, to recognise the great openings for profit which were being offered; and secondly, to calm a timid board in the face of the unavoidable start-up costs. With regard to technical problems and marketing arrangements, he was content to delegate, even to the point of laziness.

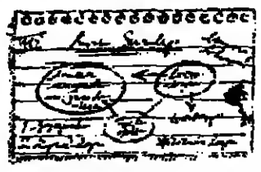
The Reuter Monitor Money Rates service, launched in 1973, proved to be particularly profitable, changing in a few years the very face and fortunes of Reuters. As late as 1968 the company was still reporting an overall loss: by 1981, the year of Long's departure, it was heading towards annual profits of hundreds of millions. Glen Renfrew, Long's successor as managing director, ensured that this success quickly caused himself and Nelson to become multi-millionaires through share options. In contrast, Long, who had been their chief, received no such great extra financial reward for his work. He always claimed that he did not care about this, which may have been true. None the less, in 1965 one fellow journalist (not from Reuters) described Long in print as a "tragic hero". Perhaps the financial deprivation was not exactly tragic, and maybe Long was never quite a hero. But the remark was significant.

By the late 1970s Long was obviously bored by his job at Reuters, and in 1981 he eagerly accepted an invitatioo from Rupert Murdoch to become managing director of Times Newspapers, and subsequently deputy chairman of News International. Unfortunately, this career move did not work out. Long had no experience of newspaper management, and he lacked the patience (even if he possessed the deviousness) necessary to deal with the print unions. He also became something of a laughing-stock in journalistic circles over an intense correspondence published in *The Times* about the provenance of cheese provided at Albert Roux's restaurant.

Long left News International in 1984, and lived thereafter in France. In retirement, he gave an impression of disappointment about himself, unnecessarily so ("I'm a shit"). Even his sharpest critics could oot deny that he had overseen the revival of a great communications company, often called a national institution, even if never so by the cosmopolitan Long himself. Without the introduction of much capital and more innovation, recognised by Long as urgently necessary, Reuters would slowly but surely have faded away.

DONALD READ

Gerald Long, journalist: born York 22 August 1923; staff, Reuters 1948-81, assistant general manager 1960, general manager 1963-73, managing director 1973-81; managing director, Times Newspapers 1981-82; deputy chairman, News International 1982-84; married 1951 Anne Hamilton Walker (two sons, three daughters); died Paris 8 November 1998.



CYBERNETIC NOTES

DENISE DANKS

Battle of the black and white hats

IT'S THE fashion nowadays to call programmers wbo confine themselves to writing code "white hats", and those who also enjoy breaking and entering, "black hats", as if the distinction was ever clearer than mud.

Two whey-faced, bespectacled hackers currently dominate the electronic pages of the world's virtual newspapers. One is Bill Gates, the Henry Ford of the personal computer industry, chairman of the software giant Microsoft Corp, to some the devil incarnate for making the cyberworld Windows-shaped. He's the white hat. The other is Kevin Mitnick, unemployed, one-time fugitive from justice and the longest-serving detainee at the Metropolitan Detention Center, Los Angeles. He's the black hat.

Both Gates and Mitnick are wrestling with an American justice system that wishes to make examples of them both. Whereas Gates is feared because his phenomenal success in the highly competitive computer business has given him the wealth and power of a nation state and a *de facto* monopoly of the world's most widely used business tool, Mitnick is feared because of what people imagine he might do, and others like him, when Gatesworld is wired up, and relies on being safely and securely so.

Bill Gates has deep pockets to pay the phalanxes of lawyers and spin doctors be needs. He will probably not end up in gaol even if it is proved that he is a black-hat businessman and his company broke the laws of capitalism and ruined its competitors. Were it to be proved, then his fortune and his company would be hostage to the lawsuits that would follow, all based on estimated losses of victim companies.

Kevin Mitnick is beoig accused of causing his victims losses of a mere $80m and is facing a 200-year sentence for his crimes which, on closer examination, amount to theft of telephone source code (computer instructions which determine how a system behaves), which he kept to himself – the worth of which is debatable – and a few hours of free mobile-phone calls.

Hijacking source code is not as shocking as it might appear. Computer companies whose patents have been infringed go to court only if they see their technology being exploited successfully by their competitors and a deal between them cannot be struck. Cases are almost invariably settled by commercial arrangements that, they hope, are mutually beneficial.

Mitnick refused to plea-bargain and has now been in federal custody for nearly four years awaiting trial. He has spent time in solitary and his reputation for electronic wizardry is so feared, the authorities' ignorance of electronics so great, that he was once deprived of a Walkman in case he used it to bug his warders.

Thanks to the laxity of its original design, the Internet retains its potential for accessible free speech. Mitnick incarcerated, though broke, is not without a voice. He has his own website. His supporters continually lobby for his freedom. Whatever Mitnick did, they reckon, isn't worth what he's got. As a consequence, websites, including that of *The New York Times*, have been regularly targeted by hackers and their pages overrun with slogans, scribblings, spoof threats, and juveoile smut in order to raise the profile of Mitnick's case and attack anyone else they feel has offended them.

A long sentence for Mitnick would ensure that hackers, however they are motivated, would be more likely to plea-bargain io the future. The defence thinks it suits the government to portray Mitnick as a dangerous public nuisance in order to justify its own agenda for regulation and control of the Internet and the telecommunications industry.

But Mitnick pursued his hacking career, rather typically, for knowledge and control. He did not have the criminality to sell trade secrets in Taiwan nor the white-hat profit motive to exploit what he found. If he had done so, he might, like Bill Gates, have got himself the best justice money can buy.

Denise Danks's latest novel, 'Phreak', is published by Victor Gollancz, £9.99

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

HAMMERSLEY: On 7 November, to Alexandra (née Spratt) and Paul, a daughter, Mia Theadora.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, functions, Forthcoming marriages, Marriages), which must be submitted in writing (please include a daytime telephone number), are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

The *Independent's* main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

The OBITUARIES e-mail address is obituaries@independent.co.uk

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; Nijmegen Company Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

TOMORROW
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Gnards, 10am.

BIRTHDAYS

TOMORROW: The Prince of Wales, 50; King Hussein of Jordan, 63; Sir Lawrie Barratt, chairman, Barratt Developments, plc, 71; Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former secretary-general, United Nations, 76; Mr Quentin Crewe, writer and restaurateur, 72; Mr James Crowden, Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, 71; Mr Paul Dacre, editor, *Daily Mail*, 50; Mr Lord Dawson QC, former Solicitor General for Scotland, 50; Mr Michael Dobbs, novelist, 50; Ms Louise Ellman MP, 53; Mr David Elstein, chief executive, Channel 5, 54; The Right Rev Mgr George Hay, parish priest, 68; M Bernard Hinault, cyclist, 44; Mr Peter Katin, coocert pianist, 68; Mr Mark Le Fanu, general secretary, the Society of Authors, 52; Mr Thomas Macan, ambassador to Lithuania, 52; Air Marshal Sir Richard Nelson, 91; Mr Patrick Nicholls MP, 50; Mr Gunther Sachs, former bobsleigh champion, 66; Miss Diana Skilbeck, Headmistress, the Queen's School, Chester, 56; Sir Dudley Smith, former MP, 72; Sir Joseph Smith, former director, Public Health Laboratory Service, 68; Sir Arthur Watts QC, former legal adviser, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 67; The Rev John Witheridge, Headmaster, Charterhouse, 45.

TOMORROW: Mr Ed Asner, actor, 69; Mr Howard Baker, lawyer and senator, 73; Mr J.G. Ballard, science-fiction writer, 68; Mr John M. Banfield, former chairman, Mobil Oil, 51; Mr Daniel Barenboim, pianist and conductor, 56; Mr Andrew Castle, tennis player and broadcaster, 35; Sir Geoffrey Chandler, chairman, Amnesty International, UK Business Group, 76; Miss Petula Clark, singer and actress, 66; Mr André Deutsch, publisher, 81; Professor Peter Dickinson, pianist and composer, 64; Mr Martin Hammond, Headmaster of Tonbridge School, 54; Mr John Hobhouse, former chairman, RSPCA, 88; Miss Paula Kahn, former chief executive and chairman, Longman Group, 58; Mr Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of Poland, 44; Mr Brian Low, former High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, 61; Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, former MP, 60; Mr David Rae Smith, chartered accountant, 79; Mr Paul Raymond, impresario, 73; Canoo Eric Staples, former chaplain to the Queen, 88; Mr Sam Waterston, actor, 58; Sir Roger Young, former Principal, George Watson's College, Edinburgh, 75.

ANNIVERSARIES

TODAY
Births: Benjamin Hoadly, Bishop of Bangor, 1676; William Glen, poet, 1789; Claude-Oscar Monet, Impressionist painter, 1840; Leo Hendrik Baekeland, inventor of Bakelite, 1863; Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Indian statesman, 1889; Mrs Mamie Eisenhower (Mamie Doud), 1896; Harold Larwood, cricketer, 1904; Dame Elisabeth Frink, sculptor, 1930.

Deaths: Justinian I, Roman emperor, 565; Nell (Eleanor) Gwyn, actress and mistress of Charles II, 1687; Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, mistress of Charles II, 1734; Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, philosopher, 1831; Hector Hugh Munro ("Saki"), writer, killed in action 1916; Tony Richardson, film and theatre director, 1991.

On this day: one of the greatest known earthquakes in England occurred, 1318; book tokens first went on sale, 1932; Coventry Cathedral was destroyed by enemy bombing, 1940; the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* was sunk, 1941; the *New Musical Express* published Britain's first pop music chart, 1952; after a subterranean volcano erupted, a new island, named Surtsey, appeared off Iceland, 1963; the *Apollo 12* spacecraft was launched from Cape Kennedy, 1969; Princess Anne married Captain Mark Phillips, 1973.

Today is the Feast Day of St Adeotus Aribert, St Dubricius or Dyfrig, St Laurence O'Toole, St Nicholas Tavelic, St Peter of Narbonne and St Stephen of Cuneo.

TOMORROW
Births: Catharine of Braganza, queen of Charles II, 1638; William Pitt the Elder, first Earl of Chatham, statesman, 1708; Sir William (Friedrich Wilhelm) Herschel, astronomer, 1738; Charlotte Mary Mew, poet, 1869; Georgia O'Keeffe, painter, 1887; William Averell Harriman, diplomat, 1891; Erwin Johannes Eugen Rommel, field marshal, 1891; Aneurin Bevan, statesman, 1897; Sir Sacheverell Sitwell Bt, poet and writer, 1897; Hamish Hamilton, publisher, 1900.

Deaths: Johannes Kepler, astronomer, 1630; Aelbert Jacobsz Cuyp, painter, 1691; George Romney, portrait painter, 1802; Emil Durkheim, sociologist, 1917; Viola Tree, actress and author, 1938; Lionel Barrymore (Blythe), actor, 1954; Tyrone Edmund Power, actor, 1958; John Le Mesurier, actor, 1983.

On this day: Isaac Pitman published his shorthand system, 1837; Loodon was flooded when the Thames rose by over 28 feet, 1875; Brazil became a republic, 1889; floods and landslides caused over 500 deaths in northern Haiti, 1963.

Tomorrow is the Feast Day of Saints Abibus, Gurias and Samonas, St Albert the Great, St Desiderius or Didier of Cohors, St Fintan of Rheinau, St Leopold of Austria and St Malo or Machutus.

LECTURES

TODAY
National Gallery: Tom Parsons, "Mythical Beasts (ii): Poussin, *Cephalus and Aurora*", 12 noon.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Frances Musker, "Fashionable Dress, 1550-1700", 2pm.
Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "John Singer Sargent: virtuoso performances", 1pm.
British Museum: Paul Collins, "Hunting Animals in Ancient Assyria", 11.30am; Paul Collins, "The Discovery and Revival of Ancient Assyria", 1.30pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Moya Corcoran, "Julia Margaret Cameron", 3pm.

TOMORROW
Victoria and Albert Museum: Frances Musker, "Fashionable Dress, 1700-1800", 2pm.
Tate Gallery: Turner Prize Artists' Talks: Cathy de Monchaux talks about her work, 4pm (telephone 0171-887 8604 for tickets).
National Portrait Gallery: Paul Webb, "J.F. Kennedy and the Special Relationship", 3pm.

DINNERS

Manchester Consular Association
The Annual Banquet of the Manchester Consular Association was held last night at the Victoria and Albert Hotel, Manchester. Mr Wang Zhidong received the guests. Among those present were:

Col John Timmins, Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester; Mr Tony Burn, Deputy Lord Mayor of Manchester; Mr Tony Lloyd MP, Minister of State, Foreign Office; Mr Zhengang Ma, Ambassador of China.

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Let the Aztecs wipe the smugness off your face

THE CHIEF Rabbi once told me (and I've been waiting 47 years to say that) that if you wanted a definition of Judaism then you could do worse than think of it as the language God uses to talk to Jews. I thought that was rather neat at the time, simple, self-effacing and deceptively wise.

I was reminded of it again this week as a new film opened in Londoo dealing with the largely forgotten role in the First World War of Hindu soldiers from the British Empire – men from the Indian subcontinent who fought alongside the English, Welsh, Scots, and Irish and who died thousands of miles from bome on the Western Front. *The Dance of Shiva* focuses on the relationship between the Christian padre, Captain Greville, and one of his Hindu flock before tackling, by association, the conflicting claims to truth of what seem mutually exclusive world faiths.

The year 1915, when the action is set, is a time of certainties. Christianity is true; the rest are false. But on the battlefield things are oot so clear-cut and even an Anglican chaplain in His Majesty's Armed Forces is forced to conclude that *in extremis* the philosophy cootained in Hinduism's eternal cycle of birth, death, and rebirth might offer some sort of solace to soldiers aware that their next few minutes would, more than likely, be their last (for now) on earth.

But Captain Greville has to confront the much more troubling possibility that this philosophy – despite its pantheon of implausible gods – might have a lot in common with the Christian philosophy; worse still, the Christian truth a.k.a. THE Christian truth. Both cannot be right. Can they?

By coincidence I, too, have been faced with similar thoughts this week, though thankfully from the comfort of a study chair. After nine months of research I have just finished a children's book on world religions ("I'm a very slow reader," the late Frank Muir once remarked). After nine mooths of research my head is packed with gurus and prophets and saviours and buddhas; it is full of spirits and kamis and huacas and totems; of proverbs and koans and sutras and suras; of Creation, Destruction, of Dreamtime, of End Time; of Sky Gods and Rain Gods and no God and One God. And it makes you think that quintessentially post-modern thought: can they all be right – or have most of these competing religions got it wrong?

All this "comparative religion", as it used to be called, is a problem for those claiming any one religious tradition has a monopoly oo truth. Which is rather upsetting to a middle-of-the-road Anglican like me who has been taught that salvation and entry into God's presence are through Christ alone.

FAITH & REASON

TREVOR BARNES

Are all religions essentially the same? On the battlefields of the Great War one answer emerged to this most post-modern of questions. But it will not serve for all ages

But is it right to dismiss Judaism as only half of the story or Islam as a needless embellishment of a matter which was settled once and for all in AD 30 odd? Is the world-view of Hinduism simply flawed? Are the insights of Buddhism quaint but essentially misguided? To put it more directly: are the millions of Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians, Sikhs, Taoists and the rest simply barking up the wrong tree?

It is not enough to be content with the line about all beliefs being equally valid. Exposure to ancient Aztec belief is enough to wipe the relativist smugness off your face. The implicit tolerance of all religions as essentially different paths towards the same goal rather hreaks down in the face of human sacrifice and the religious injunction to slaughter a dozen or more prisoners a day to satisfy the blood lust of the sun god. Confronted with such "alien gods" you can quite easily imagine, indeed actually feel, the jaded disillusion of Eliot's magi as they stood in the presence of "Truth" in the form of the Infant Jesus and prepared to make their weary way back to a homeland bopelessly in error.

So what is one to make of the polarisation inherent in the "this is right/that is wrong" school of thinking? Those disinclined to a religious world view have a ready answer: they are all wrong. They argue that all religion is an essentially human projection of self-validating "truths" which are oothing more than elaborate, often infantile, fictions. And dangerous fictions at that. After all, they say, it was a Christian country we have to thank for this week's other anniversary, *Kristalnacht*, the night of broken glass when Nazis destroyed Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues in an orgy of destructive hatred that signalled the waking nightmare of the Holocaust had begun.

Those of a religious disposition cannot argue with that and, however splendid the achievements of religion, all it takes is one Crusade or armed Jihad to put them on the back foot. And yet, for those devout Hindus and Christians who went to their fate before the Armistice was signed 80 years ago this week, there was more to religion than that. They have a different story to tell and a different understanding of the power of faith at that terrible moment in their lives.

In all conscience all they could do was listen to the voice of the divine in whatever language it chose and conclude, with Eliot once again, that "the rest is not our business".

Don't worry... be happy

Bossa Nova is 40 this year, the sunny product of Brazil's post-war boom. So how come the beat's as fresh as ever? By Alex Webb

Some musical revolutions happen quietly. Forty years ago this year, just such a revolution was launched by a 78rpm single on EMI's Brazilian subsidiary Odeon. The single was called "Chega de Saudade" (No More Blues). The new record was unaccompanied by any new stance, slang, sexual come-on or sartorial trend – anything, in fact, that today's marketing men could get their teeth into. But it contained that rare thing: a new rhythm, a new kind of swing. "Chega de Saudade" was the first Bossa Nova (new beat) record.

It is the archetypal Brazilian guitar shuffle, and an enduring influence on popular music throughout the West, from its breakthrough in pre-Beatles USA to its presence in the music of artists such as The Beautiful South, Everything But The Girl, Sade and, most recently, Beck and Sean Lennon. Today, it is a music library staple for films and ads looking for a gloss of sophistication, as well as the bane of every cheesy hotel foyer. But what explains its extraordinary success?

In Brazil in the Fifties post-war optimism had not yet been tarnished by experience. President Kubitschek was building Oscar Niemeyer's futuristic new capital Brasilia and proclaiming "50 years' development in five"; *Cinema Novo* was emerging; the national team won the World Cup for the first time in 1958. In the bars of Rio's beach neighbourhood Ipanema, a group of self-aware musicians and poets was gathering, including the established pop and classical composer Antonio Carlos "Tom" Jobim and the poet Vinicius de Moraes. Significantly, perhaps, almost all of this milieu were the offspring of wealthy parents, and had the luxury of a level of musical experimentation denied to most pop or samba musicians.

It was into this circle that a young guitarist called João Gilberto came. The meeting of Jobim and Gilberto was the Brazilian equivalent of John and Paul bumping into each other at Woolton Hall village fête. Gilberto provided the characteristic rhythm that would propel the carefully crafted, jazzy melodies of Jobim's songs into world recognition. Gilberto took a percussion cross-rhythm from samba – the beat of the tamborim – and applied it to the chordal accompaniment he played on guitar; meanwhile others in the circle, particularly Vinicius and Newton Mondonca, contributed the songs' adult, wistful lyrics. These lyrics Gilberto sang in a voice so somnolent that industry bosses hearing him for the first time remarked: "Tom [Jobim] said he'd bring us a singer but he ended up bringing a ventriloquist."

The release of "Chega de Saudade" in the summer of 1958 brought a critical response ranging from apathy to dislike. The Odeon boss Andre Midani persisted, however, and in 1959 released an album by Gilberto.

"As we couldn't get through the radio," recalls Midani, "we went through universities, which in 1958 was an absolute revolution. The artists faced resistance from their middle-class families; on the other hand the music faced resistance from the radio stations. So we went into universities, because that would appease the families and at the same time we would go directly to the young crowd. And here, we had an immediate response. And then it got picked up on radio."

The music's huge international break came in 1962, with the LP *Jazz Samba* by the US converts Charlie Byrd and Stan Getz, followed famously by the LP *Getz/Gilberto* in 1964 with Astrud Gilberto's lisping version of "Girl from Ipanema". Getz was to Bossa Nova what Dizzy Gillespie was to Cuban music: a North American who approached the music with genuine humility and sensitivity. Unfortunately the explosion of American interest led to most of the copyrights to the great Bossas being swallowed by US publishers in very poor deals, something that Jobim was to rue to the end of his life. The apathy of Brazilian publishers and the laid-back, vaguely anti-business mentality of the Bossa pioneers did not help.

Two events were to bring the Bossa heyday to a close: the arrival of four young Liverpudlians in the States in 1964, and the imposition of military government in Brazil the same year. The gentle optimism of the Bossa no longer seemed the appropriate sound-track to Brazil's brutal new realities; a new wave of Brazilian songwriters was waiting, armed with the musical techniques of Bossa Nova but thinking in darker, more subversive lyrical terms. Bossa Nova became part of the musical library of Brazil, but was no longer at the forefront.

Jobim continued to make records, including the latter-day standard "Aguas de Marco" in 1972 and the adventurous "Urubu" in 1976. He died in 1994. Gilberto, regarded as increasingly eccentric and unreliable by music promoters, nonetheless still performs and records occasionally. He is the last of the original circle to remain active, and his brilliance is undiminished.

One reason that Bossa Nova is still around is because musicians like to play it – they love the clever middle eight of "Ipanema", the dissonances of "Desafinado". But it also communicates something unique to the listener.

The great Bossas captured an extraordinary, optimistic moment in Brazil and combined it with the country's unique swing and a peculiar delight at both the beauty of nature and the possibilities of modern living. The form also contains moments of wonderful tenderness. There are few more intimate sounds in music than Gilberto whispering Jobim's own lyrics on his neglected classic "Ligia" from the LP *The Best of Two Worlds*: "I've never dreamed of you," he sings in Portuguese, "I've never been to the cinema/ I don't go to Ipanema/ I don't like the rain, nor the sun/...And when I've telephoned you/ I put the receiver down/ I don't know your name/ And at the piano I forget the silly words of love I was going to say/ Oh Ligia..."

The musicians are playing so quietly, so carefully, that they sound as though they are trying not to wake the baby next door; Gilberto sings as if he is telling you a secret. The great Bossa Nova records are perfect miniatures, moments of serenity in a noisy century.

Bossa bossmen and women: clockwise from top right: Chico Buarque, Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto, João Gilberto and 'Tom' Jobim *Redferns*

Ten of the best Bossas

1. João Gilberto & Stan Getz, "Ligia", 1976. From the Getz/Gilberto reunion LP Best of Two Worlds: Bossa at its coolest and most seductive. Getz excels.

2. João & Astrud Gilberto with Stan Getz, "Corcovado", 1964. From the best-known Bossa LP of all, Getz/Gilberto, this version of the Jobim song includes both Portuguese and English lyrics.

3. Doris Monteiro, "Regra Tres" 1972. Fast and jazzy, this little morality tale by Toquinho and Vinicius is proof that Bossa need not be soporific. The "rule three" of the title is that less is more, but the singer complains that her boyfriend gives her so little that the rule no longer applies.

4. João Gilberto "Chega de Saudade", 1958. The one that started it all sounds surprisingly unassuming now but still delights.

5. Tom Jobim & Elis Regina, "Aguas de Marco", 1974. Do not be put off by its later use as a Coca-Cola jingle; its simplicity conceals a wonderful chord sequence.

6. Stan Getz & Charlie Byrd, "Desafinado", 1962. A close call with many other takes of this song, but this, which starts with the bass and brings in percussion layer by layer, allows the listener to anatomise the rhythm.

7. Tom Jobim & Sting "Insensatez/How Insensitive", 1994. For once, Sting's robotic vocals sound perfectly appropriate. From Jobim's last album, with the composer adding vocal harmonies and piano.

8. Chico Buarque "Construcão", 1971. Buarque was driven out of Brazil by the military. "Construcão" starts as a conventional Bossa but the lyrics, telling the story of the death of a construction worker, are darker than anything Jobim wrote.

9. Ivan Lins & Terence Blanchard "Antes Que Seja Tarde", 1996. Pianist Lins wrote this subtle protest song in the last years of military government.

10. João & Astrud Gilberto "Girl from Ipanema" with Stan Getz, 1964. Well, it had to be in there.

The Ghost of Christmas Past will arrive at platform six

Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
BRISTOL OLD VIC

NO SOONER has the final firework been ignited in celebration of the fine old English custom of flame-grilling Catholics than Yule Britannia is upon us. A tidal wave of mince pies and fake snow cascades through the shops to join the advance guard of Christmas puddings that snuck on to the shelves in September. Santa abandons his elves at their busiest time of year to embark on a hectic round of product endorsements. And "Stop the Cavalry" makes its perennial and unwelcome return. As the forces of commerce drag the start of the festive season ever closer to October, it is only right that Dickens's plea for philanthropy also gets an unseasonally early outing.

Stagings of *A Christmas Carol* usually take one of three forms: a "yuletide entertainment", a dark, Victorian ghost story with shades of Edgar Allen Poe, or a cautionary tale for smug fat cats and other members of the Carlton Club. But the director and adaptor, Andy Hay, shies from the easy options, and seeks instead to stage a "plea for change" which, he argues, "is not strictly about Christmas". His chosen path is a near-word-for-word presentation of Mr Dickens's writings.

As such, the production exemplifies many of the pitfalls of literary adaptation. The rhythm, flow and narrative structure of a piece of prose are usually totally different from those of a drama. Just as a concert performance is not an opera, this is not a piece of drama so much as a rehearsed reading, and while remaining true to the book, it fails to fulfil the rich visual and dramatic potential which differentiates theatre from the written word.

Mike Bearwish, a designer of outstanding flair and creativity, excels himself with the opening scene, a Victorian-alley tableau by Anton Pieck: it has the slight distortion of an early Disney scene and a metropolitan fustiness to which "Victorian" Christmas cards can only aspire. However, having exhausted himself with such a vision of loveliness, Mr Bearwish apparently took to his bed, and his influence fades like the Cheshire Cat until Scrooge is left wandering an empty stage punctuated only by black drapes. The visions of the Cratchits' and Fred's Christmas festivities are played so far back in this hangar-like space as to turn Tiny Tim into Microscopic Tim. Visibility is not aided by the fact that the Stygian gloom is chronically mis-lit, with Scrooge's feet regularly being the only subject of illumination.

Not to be outdone in this feast of maladroit technicality, the sound department arranges for the Ghost of Christmas Past to be so distorted and unethereal that it would come as no surprise to hear her announce the arrival of the 15.23 from Liverpool Street. With such a lack of technical polish, and a set so minimalist as to be non-existent, you wonder whether you haven't stumbled into the technical run by mistake.

But despite the page-bound two-dimensionality of the text and the non-dimensionality of the set, Terry Taplin produces a rounded, glowingly three-dimensional Scrooge. He manages to make believable both the choleric Inspector Morse-like "bah humbug" days and the transformation to New Scrooge, a giggling blend of Ken Dodd and Harry Worth.

Andy Hay's desire to strip the story of chocolate-box glitz is admirable. It is unfortunate that the end product is literally, rather than metaphorically, a "dark tale".

TOBY O'CONNOR MORSE

Thrift, Horatio, thrift! And stuff the quality

Simon Callow

A COUPLE of weeks ago, in conjunction with something else, Trevor Nunn alluded in passing to his dream for the National Theatre: to re-establish a permanent company there. He announced his idea so shyly, so tentatively, so wistfully, even, as if it were impossible – the ideal that has been at the heart of every plan for a National Theatre since such things were first contemplated over a 100 years ago, "the ideal that led Peter Hall to found the Royal Shakespeare Company and underpinned Laurence Olivier's assumption of the leadership of the National at the Old Vic".

The models were there: La Comédie Française, the Schiller Theatre in Berlin, the Burg Theatre in Vienna – all supported by the state, richly equipped, offering the citizens the very best that the theatre could offer; all sources of national pride. The new century brought ever more companies: the Moscow Art Theatre, the Abbey, Jouvet's la Compagnie des Quinze, and then, after the Second World War, and, perhaps most influential of all, Bertolt Brecht's Berliner Ensemble. Only Britain lacked either a national theatre or a company based, like Brecht's or Stanislavsky's, on an idea.

Two theatres, working on the most meagre of shoestring budgets, the Memorial Theatre in Stratford and the Old Vic in Waterloo, held together companies for whole seasons in a wide range of classical plays, and the development of the actors' work was astonishing, laying the ground for the great generation of actors now just gone. When finally, thanks to a very British combination of heady idealism, political chicanery and the operation of the old boys' network, these two organisations transmogrified themselves into the Royal Shakespeare Company and today's Old Vic within a couple of years in the early Sixties, it seemed we might at last be entering the theatrical kingdom of heaven.

And indeed, the richness of fare provided by those theatres during the first decade, both in terms of staging and acting, is enough to break your heart by comparison with what they offer today. Not, I hasten to add, that the talent is any less remarkable, or that there is any less passion, or less commitment. It is purely and simply that it is impossible for *ad hoc* groups to produce the results that an ensemble can achieve, and there is today no ensemble in Britain. Why?

The answer, too boring to be bearable, is always the same: thrift, Horatio, thrift. It is more expensive, without question, to keep a group together than it is to cast from play to play. And for a group to function at the level that the RSC reached under Hall and then Nunn, or the National under Olivier and then Hall, the inspiration, whether from an idea or from an individual, needs to be white hot. Somewhere, they lost their power to inspire their members to think of themselves as a team, a family, a regiment – an ensemble. Being a member of the RSC or the National became just another job: a rather less well paid job than the one in the West End or in television or film. It is unlikely that it will ever be able to compete in terms of financial reward with these media, and if Nunn's ensemble is to come into existence, it will certainly be incumbent on leading actors to make a sacrifice. If the theatre in this country is really to move forward, it must come into existence.

We're still drawing on the legacy of those companies in terms of the present crop of sixty-something actors, formed and nurtured in them, whose work simply could not be what it is today without that experience.

To take two at random: Ian Holm, now blissfully returned to stage work, and Elizabeth Spriggs, whose supremely achieved performance in *Sense and Sensibility* was a stirring reminder of the depth of the RSC of that vintage. As in so many areas of British artistic life, we managed to achieve something remarkable, and then, instead of taking it forward, we were immediately put into the position of fighting to keep what we had, making compromise after compromise till the original glory began to look very distant. If Nunn is able to create his ensemble – and there is no one in the British theatre more likely to make it happen – we may look forward to a new heroic age of acting.

And then perhaps he might consider creating a school of acting attached to the theatre; this is the source of the inspired work of most of the great European and Slavonic companies. There is no limit to the depth and the brilliance of what could appear on our stages. That's my idea of the millennium.

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY MIKE HIGGINS

EXCELLENT · GOOD · OK · POOR · DEADLY

OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW	OUR VIEW	ON VIEW
THE FILM FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS  **Johnny Depp and Benicio Del Toro star in Terry Gilliam's adaptation of Hunter S Thompson's druggy, satirical account of Nixon-era US.**	"It has the forlorn look of a museum piece; a screeching battle hymn that wants to celebrate hysteria, and, instead, merely succumbs to it," bemoaned Anthony Quinn. "[It] celebrates extreme drug abuse and social irresponsibility of all kinds – sexual harassment, theft, homicidal driving, threatening people with guns, you name it," tutted the *Daily Mail*. Far out, thought the *Evening Standard*: "A wildly enjoyable trip – decorative, morally reprehensible and ultimately an eye-opener." *Time Out* was less impressed: "Depp and Del Toro... end up mugging like mad, while the merciless satirising of American mores is finally too relentlessly weird, wacky and tacky."	They said it was unfilmable – and they were right. Gilliam delivers typically imaginative visuals but, without a plot or a point, it's a lot of narcotic sound and fury signifying almost nothing.	*Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* is out on general release. certificate 18. 118 mins.
THE PLAY TROILUS AND CRESSIDA  **Michael Boyd hauls Shakespeare's difficult play into the early 20th-century, the Trojans becoming Irish rebels and the Greeks the occupying English.**	Notwithstanding strong performances, *Paul Taylor was unconvinced: "Conceptually* the production fails to add up: it feels like an incoherent accumulation of individually compelling touches." "Why does Ajax resemble a particularly dim heavy-metal rock star?" wondered *The Daily Telegraph*. The *Evening Standard* was kinder to Boyd's "ingeniously conceived and powerfully *staged" production: "Though the* framework is rickety and Shakespeare's vision compressed, an atmosphere of anti-heroic oppressive tension grows." "For once, it's like the work of the real RSC, rather than a scratch team falsely trading under that name," chimed *The Guardian*.	Cynical, blood-stained and *savage about the futility of war, Troilus and Cressida* truly belongs to this century, but not to Michael Boyd's lurid, wayward production.	*Troilus and Cressida* is at *The Pit, Barbican*, London EC2 until 21 November. For bookings and enquiries, call 0171-628 2295
THE TV PROGRAMME BIG TRAIN  **Following the success of their sitcom *Father Ted*, writers Graham Linehan and Arthur Mathews dispense with the priest-bating to return with a new comedy sketch series.**	"One had quite high expectations... and divine it was," enthused Serena Mackesy, adding: "If the BBC bosses haven't already recommissioned this, they're greater fools than News 24 suggests." Been there, done that, reckoned *The Mirror*: "*Monty Python's Flying Circus* was doing the same sort of thing over 25 years ago far better." "I appreciated the show more thinking about it later than watching it," remarked the *Daily Mail*. *The Times* was more sanguine: "Those expecting something as magically mad as *Father Ted* may be disappointed but there were enough intelligently crazed routines here to make you feel that tuning in next week won't be a waste of time."	Sketch shows, including the hallowed *Fast Show*, are a mixed bag, but the pedigree of Mathews, Linehan and their collaborators suggests that *Big Train* is certainly on the right track.	*Big Train* continues on BBC 2 every Monday evening at 10pm.
THE ALBUM WHITNEY HOUSTON  **For *My Love Is Your Love*, her first non-soundtrack album in eight years, Houston has collaborated with Mariah Carey, Wyclef Jean, Missy Elliott and Lauryn Hill.**	"Intriguing," remarked Andy Gill, "though as the album progresses... she slips back into her comfortable old routine." *The Guardian* looked on the bright side: "Houston makes a praiseworthy job of exploring genres outside her usual area... She's never sounded less uptight." The *Daily Mail* also approved: "Only occasionally does she sound ill-at-ease with tougher, modern beats and, if anything, it is the traditional ballads which disappoint." "An eye-opening set," agreed *The Times*, as long as you ignore the album's first single "When You Believe": "an *untypically* simple-minded duet with Mariah Carey which sends out all the wrong signals."	Left behind by the current R&B stars, Whitney has recruited the cream of the crop to make a decent fist of reinventing herself for the 21st-century, but seems to get the jitters halfway through.	*My Love Is Your Love* is available from Monday on Arista Records
THE COMEDY JACKIE MASON  **The veteran Brooklyn-born rabbi-turned-comedian returns to London with a new show – *Much Ado About Everything* – but the same old wry Jewish wise-cracking attitude.**	"Imagine a wise guy New York cabbie setting the world to rights – oo fast forward – and you get the idea," marvelled James Rampton. "He is constantly playing with racial stereotypes but in a way that is playful, rather than pernicious." *The Daily Telegraph* was appalled, however, finding "his comments, particularly about blacks and homosexuals, unpleasant, oddly obsessive and surely passé". It added that his stage presence "is curiously fascistic in its overtones and devoid of intimacy". *The Times* thought him "unsure of his audience" but was more tolerant of his tastelessness: "That half-suppressed anger is what makes his shows so rewarding."	OK, so Mason's a little out of line with some of his non-PC material, but he's still untouchable on his home turf: the never-ending differences between Jews and Gentiles.	*Much Ado About Everything* continues at the Playhouse Theatre, London WC2 until 28 November. For bookings and enquiries, call 0171-839 4409

EXIT POLL

THE EXHIBITION
WORLD PRESS PHOTO
RFH, LONDON

NEIL HALLIGAN
25, journalist, Ireland
"It *certainly* makes you aware of what is going on in the world, rather than concentrating on your own area or country. The images here are striking. Some of the sports pictures I have seen in the national papers, but a lot of the images struck me as amazing."

PHILIP JAMES
42, photographer, London
"The images that stand out most were of the New York prostitute. It really told the story of that kind of desolation and *survival. I think* a lot of the pictures just happen to catch a moment in time and are quite effective. But some of them seem a little more staged. I tend to look at the staged images with scepticism, because I am aware they might not tell the full story."

ELISA KREY
25, photographer, London
"To have all these images in one gallery is amazing. It is inspiring to come and look at other people's work; how they have told the story in a single shot. I love documentary shots that tell me about something rather than shots that are set up. I prefer to see things how they are."

MAGNUS RUNE
20, shop assistant, Sweden
"There is a lot of violence at the *moment. The* images of Albania are really horrifying, the pure rage. It tells you something you wouldn't get on the news. When you hear the news you don't get how people think and how they feel, you just get the facts. I think it is very important to show this, although it is horrifying. You get the more human side."

The experts' guide to misogyny

Two classic plays, Seneca's *Medea* and David Mamet's *Oleanna*, currently on in Glasgow, illustrate vividly the danger in messing with a woman scorned – let the world's men beware. By **Sue Wilson**

A STUDY of female terrorists published a few years ago bore the arresting title *Shoot the Women First*, after an instruction commonly given to *counter-insurgency forces* – apparently women consistently prove the deadlier sex under ambush or threat, because they're less predictable, less amenable to reason.

It's a view few would quibble with after seeing either of these two Citizens' studio productions, ancient and modern variations on the theme of messing with a determined female at your peril.

Clare Venables's new version of Seneca's classic tragedy *Medea*, directed and designed by Stewart Laing, plays the piece fairly straight in terms of structure and language, albeit sprinkling the text with oods to later revenge narratives, including Congreve's immortal "Hell hath no fury..!" line.

Combined with the archly incongruous society-wedding costumes, this echo effect subtly heightens the story's elemental timelessness, even as Venables gives due sensuous prominence to the original's epic descriptive passages. The taffeta *suits and full-dress kilt regalia also*, and with equal understatement, underline the fact that at the root of Medea's betrayal by Jason be money and material power.

Kathy Kiera Clarke as Medea rightly commands centre-stage with a performance of riveting intensity and poise, an anguished fusion of gigantic, terrifying rage and hottomless grief. She, together with Ellen Sheean and Leonard Kavanagh, both on strong form as a slightly sniffy but increasingly alarmed Chorus, fill the near-bare space with vivid verbal tableaux from the drama's mythic background, recounting Medea's key role in capturing the golden fleece and saving the Argonauts, the very feats *for which she's now decried*.

Gerrard McArthur's Creon pits a fine, steely coldness against Clarke's incandescence, while Pascal Langdale as Jason strikes an effective balance between defensive arrogance and hapless incomprehension.

Those same *last attributes* are also abundantly displayed by David Mamet's college professor, John, in the second act of his (m)famous two-hander *Oleanna*, which is widely, though erroneously, regarded as an attack on political correctness.

To interpret it as such is to fall headlong into the very trap in which Mamet so cunningly and meticulously ensnares John, as virtually his every act and utterance during the first half stacks up his culpability – ethically if not always literally – *for* the charges later laid against him by his aggrieved student, Carol.

The point being that his constant interruptions, his condescension, his vanity and his presumptions of superiority all add up to entirely normal, *un-ooteworthy behaviour for a man* in his position, whereas Carol's turning of the tables transgresses umpteen expectations of the younger, poorer, lesser educated female party. "Can you deny it?" she demands repeatedly of her accusations, the crucial – and glaring, for those willing to see it – point being that indeed he cannot.

Complemeoting and powerfully committed performances from Peter Guinness and Lorna McDevitt sustain *the characters' destructive symbiosis* on both an individual and an emblematic level, each fluently at ease with the jostling nuances and staccato rhythms of Mamet's intricately crafted dialogue.

To 21 Nov, Citizens Theatre, Glasgow (booking: 0141-429 0022)

Soothing soup from a national treasure

WORLD MUSIC

LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO
RFH, LONDON

PASS THE *soup bowl*, and I'll tell you a secret. This was comfort music. Watch the audience: not the usual itching-to-dance sway for other African groups, but rapt, smiling faces with a glow in their eyes. Ladysmith Black Mambazo (LBM) has a hot line to the northern *European's* craving for inner warmth. The agency that coupled its televisioo ads to "The Star and the Wiseman" knew the score exactly

It really should do family afternoon dates, as LBM's appeal is totally homely and direct, but the act itself is a pretty *sophisticated* affair.

Once they'd run on and limbered up like a football team they were in charge. When oo-stage audience participation seemed to be getting out of hand, the founder and lead singer, Joseph Shabalala, had it sorted in a flash. The harmony of the *10* a cappella singers was spot-on, the rhythms floated, the choreography – anything from mock warmongering to simple clowning – was fast and almost aphoristic: a pose could tell a story. They sang, softly, about basic life, emotions, religion and roots, trouble.

After three decades of polishing, the music is a brilliantly worked collage of traditional melody; choral texture sometimes in several layers; voice percussion; and sound effects. Typically songs begin with a call-and-response chant, then a steady tempo sets in and gradually the music gets into a groove. This is more hypnotic than on disc, *though only* once, in the last-but-one number, did it go on long enough to hint at real excitement. Mostly it soothed the British public.

LBM: went down well without catching fire *Richard Young/Rex*

LBM is clearly seen as a South African national treasure, a threat-free area of black music, and this was an old-fashioned love-in. "Repertoire" was one of their greatest hits, with the hit single half-way through and "Homeless" at the end. Shrewdly handled, though: when the once-controversial *Graceland* collaboration came up, they made the audience sing the tune that used to be Paul Simon's.

Plenty of energy too from Busi Mhlongo in support. Her diminutive presence shuffled about in front of a five-piece band and backing singers, hitting *you* in the face with a soaring, sometimes wordless high line. Later you could hear LBM's lower voices set up the same rhythms. On Monday it went down well without catching fire. The guitar work was solid, rather than dynamic and Busi's less assertive *moments found her competing* with it in the middle register.

Extra show: RFH, Monday, 7.30pm

ROBERT MAYCOCK

THE WEEK IN RADIO

ROBERT HANKS

THERE HAS been a disturbing outbreak of revisionism about the First World War in recent years, a tendency to suggest that Butcher Haig was a highly competent general, and not such a bad stick after all. The latest and strangest version *has been* Niall Ferguson's notion that soldiers quite enjoyed the war really; how else do you explain the time it lasted?

One good thing about the torrent of war programmes on radio this last couple of weeks is that that sort of idiocy has been *swamped*: the loathsome futility of the whole business, and the disregard for the *common* soldier that fuelled the slaughter, have been re-established in the popular consciousness.

All the same, I can't help wishing *that there had been* a little less of it all. There are only so many afternoon plays about Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon you can listen to in a lifetime; *Strange Meeting* (Radio 4, Wednesday) – an entirely reasonable play for the 15 minntes I could bear to listen to it – took me well over the limit.

But one or two programmes *managed to make* the terrible facts seem fresh, particularly Ruth Prince's feature *The Unknown Soldier* (Radio 2, Tuesday). Superficially, this was a stereotypical Great War compilation: old soldier's anecdotes, *scratchy period songs* and readings from Wilfred Owen, strung together with a narrative *about the awfulness of it all*. But Prince also tried to make sense of the culture and politics the war left behind, the way Versailles led oeatly on to Munich and Dunkirk. And Tony Robinson brought to the narration a lightoess and a pleasing sense of irony, simply observed rather than strained for – noting how a pair of graves near Mons (for Private J Parr; one of the first soldiers killed in August 1914, and Private G E Ellison, the very last British soldier to die on 11 November) bookended four and a half years of slaughter.

Meanwhile, *The World Tonight* (Radio 4, Wednesday) devoted some time to discussing the consequences of the war. Lisa Jardine and Will Hotton were asked for their views – despite the fact that oeither, as far as I could make out, had any insights to offer beyond what an intelligent listener could pick up from a couple of paperbacks and the odd edition of *Timewatch*. We moved on to an item about the Metropolitan Opera in New York. For this, they'd called on Norman Lebrecht to be his controversial self. This clichéd approach to experts is getting me down. Yesterday morning, the *Today* programme tackled the relationship between monarchy and government; lo and behold, "*constitutional expert*" Vernoo Bogdanor and the Queen's biographer, Ben Pimlott. Don't get me started on Jonathan Glancey.

I don't want to put down any of these individuals (except Lisa Jardine, whose attempt to argue, in the Radio 4 programme *Lion's Den*, that the British novel is too parochial and bound up with love *affairs* in *Hampstead, was one of* this year's intellectual low points – largely because of her inability to name a novel published in the past 20 years that fitted the category she was attacking). What I want to put down is the laziness involved in asking them – the people making these programmes can't even be bothered to have a quick flick through the Rolodex. And then they wonder why Radio 4 loses listeners.

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

SIR PETER Hall has suffered a rather startling setback in his laudable aim to run a repertory season at The Old Vic next year. Sir Peter asked the Arts Council if he could have a £500,000 guarantee against loss (not a subsidy, he stresses) for the next three years. "They were sympathetic but not encouraging," he told me. "Their view is that there is sufficient serious theatre in Loodon."

How fascinating to learn that the funders of drama will pay for only so much "serious theatre". What is their cut-off point? How do they define serious? Oh to to be a fly on the wall at the oext council meeting. "I'm a bit worried about this Racine bloke in the West End. Sounds suspiciously serious." Gloomy shaking of heads all round. "Yes, French. Must be serious. Oh dear. Not even a Hollywood star we can give some public money to, and show Chris Smith we're modern and cutting-edge."

I look forward to the Arts Council drama director, Anna Stapleton, explaining what constitutes serious theatre and exactly how much there should be in Londoo. In the meantime, Peter Hall's offer to run The Old Vic with a repertory company and an artistic policy should be embraced and properly funded if there is a genuine concern about theatre, "serious" or otherwise.

IS STEPHEN Daldry (*right*), the Royal Court's artistic director, auditioning for a role as a *spin doctor?* Certainly he delivered a Shane Warne-like linguistic googly when *The Stage* raised the question of crooeyism over the Arts Council awarding an extra £2.5m lottery grant to the Royal Court. The council's chairman, Gerry Robinson, used to sit on the board of the Royal Court. Daldry told the *newspaper*: "It is not additional but extra oo top of the feasibility forecast as a result of the final and accurate costings." Not additional but extra. Staff at the Royal Court *should remember* to use that wording oext time they ask for a rise.

HERE IS the trivial arts pursuits quiz question of the week. Who described what as "an extraordinarily awkwardly designed rhinoceros"? Sir Peter Hall on the Arts Council? No. It was Sir Richard Eyre's description of the Lyttelton auditorium at the National Theatre, which, of course, he used to run. There is clearly oot much love lost between Sir Richard and the National Theatre architect Sir Denys Lasdun. At the same Barclays Theatre Week conference Sir Richard reminded the audience that he found it hard to have a constructive relatiooship with Sir Denys who *had deoounced both* Sir Richard and the designer Bill Dudley as "barbarians and vandals".

Clearly life behind the scenes at the National Theatre has *not been all air* kisses and luvvyish being there for each other. The National's design does have its problems, particularly in the Olivier's acoustics, though I *believe the* building as a whole is still vastly underrated.

THE BOOKS INTERVIEW

Whispers of immortality

Derek Walcott, friend of Ted Hughes and fellow bard, tells **Paula Burnett** about myth and memory

Derek Walcott is sitting in the corner of a small dark-panelled hotel bar, just north of Oxford Street, nursing a cold as the half-light of a dull November afternoon fades. In as many days, he has been in Heidelberg, with Volkswagen ("It's good. They're developing a kind of relationship to the arts that's international now"), in Nice, in Granada and now London. In four days' time, he will be in Bermuda for a performance of his play *Remembrance*. Tiny tables topped with beaten copper take a shine to the coal fire nestling improbably in a Victorian range. It is not hard to imagine TS Eliot's London, where "A lonely cab-horse steams and stamps". But now it is not so much Eliot as Ted Hughes who bulks the shadows. Walcott was in Spain for the Lorca centenary when he heard of his friend's death.

He is here for the British launch of his essays, *What the Twilight Says* (Faber, £9.99): three important statements of his ideas, including the beautiful Nobel Prize lecture "The Antilles", some short studies of diverse writers, and a story. Walcott is a kingfisher critic, with flashing insights, an original who writes a profound, poetic prose. Mine is his fourth appointment of the day, but he is courteous as ever. He speaks as he thinks, twisting and turning, allowing one idea to spark another, changing sentences in mid-stream to capture precisely what he is after, reminding me of Hughes's much-loved poem "The Thought-Fox". The familiar recording of it in Hughes's rich voice had begun the hastily-scheduled tribute that packed the Purcell Room the day before, to which Walcott contributed.

At 68 (and so born in the same year as Hughes), Walcott is far from retired. Now based in New York, he commutes for one night a week to Boston University to teach. Otherwise, he spends as much time as possible in his native St Lucia, where the "bounty of Sweden" has enabled him to build a house with a studio that's "very nice, nicer than the work I do".

Between writing poems, plays and screenplays, painting, and doing storyboards – not to mention directing plays, and reading internationally – he is always busy. He rises early, though not quite as early as he used to, and works at the typewriter, liking the noise that "makes you feel you're working", but aware of the "stupid age-prejudice" that he has against the computer. He rejoices that he has now given up not only alcohol but tobacco (laughing, he says "If I've done it, anybody can do anything") and has learned how to have that first coffee without a cigarette.

He is brim-full of projects. He has filmed some scenes from his play *The Odyssey*, is bringing out a volume of his watercolours with an introduction that has turned into a longish poem, and is working on screenplays, including adaptations of *Omeros*, his epic transposition of the *Odyssey* to St Lucia, and *Ti-Jean*. So many Caribbean novels would make "terrific films", he says. "I would love to do a [Sam] Selvon, setting it in London".

At home, he has plans for his Rat Island arts centre, with "a band-shell, studios, etcetera, but that is going to take a lot of money to raise". The dream is still in its infancy, but last summer he gathered a score of international theatre artists in St Lucia, including some of his old colleagues from the Trinidad Theatre Workshop, as well as some new young actors. His face lights up as he talks of their brilliance.

A question about *The Capeman* – the musical he wrote with Paul Simoo, which closed after a few weeks on Broadway and many years' work – summons a more sombre mood. For the last month, he stopped going to rehearsals, feeling betrayed by Broadway's "very high banality". "It's not a Broadway play," he insists, and talks about the "disastrous" absence of anything like the National Theatre or the RSC in the US. But he is careful not to carp. "Perhaps it *was* bad," he says, "but at least it should have gone down as its own thing". Could it be revived? There was some good work in it, he replies, which "should be somehow preserved and re-attempted ultimately" – but not yet.

I ask him about myth, discussed in "The Muse of History", one of the essays in the book. He begins by calling myth history's alternative, the opposite of reason and hierarchy, and then cites Ted Hughes's view that myth "is much more powerful than reality". He warms to his point.

"What happens now? Ted Hughes is dead. That's a fact, OK. Then there's something called the poetry of Ted Hughes. The poetry of Ted Hughes is more real, very soon, than the myth that Ted Hughes existed – because that can't be proven. You follow what I'm saying? Since this is a domain of myth, anyway – a kind of tribal-memory thing – what happens? Ted Hughes enters the tribal memory of England. So Hughes's poetry is a part of the myth of England and is part of the myth of English poetry...". He pauses. I think of Hughes, who said that, as Poet Laureate, he served the tribe.

He turns to education: "When a child's mind develops and is heading in a certain direction, we murder that mentality, we murder that imagination, by saying 'Now, that is all well and good, but now sit down and start to study'". What is lost in this process, he adds, is Traherne's and Blake's idea of the "innocence of soul".

So is writing, for him, a devotional practice? "Yes, completely. I mean, I am grateful, you know. I have to be grateful in the sense that I feel that what I have is a gift. That's another pompous expression that is out of fashion, to say that poetry is a gift. It sounds pompous because you say, who gave you the gift, and what is this gift?

"And the gift is where I am, the gift is what I have come out of, the people around me who, I think, are beautiful people. They are, because they have gone through so much, and their fortitude is tremendous, and their beauty is part of that fortitude, and the landscape they inhabit..."

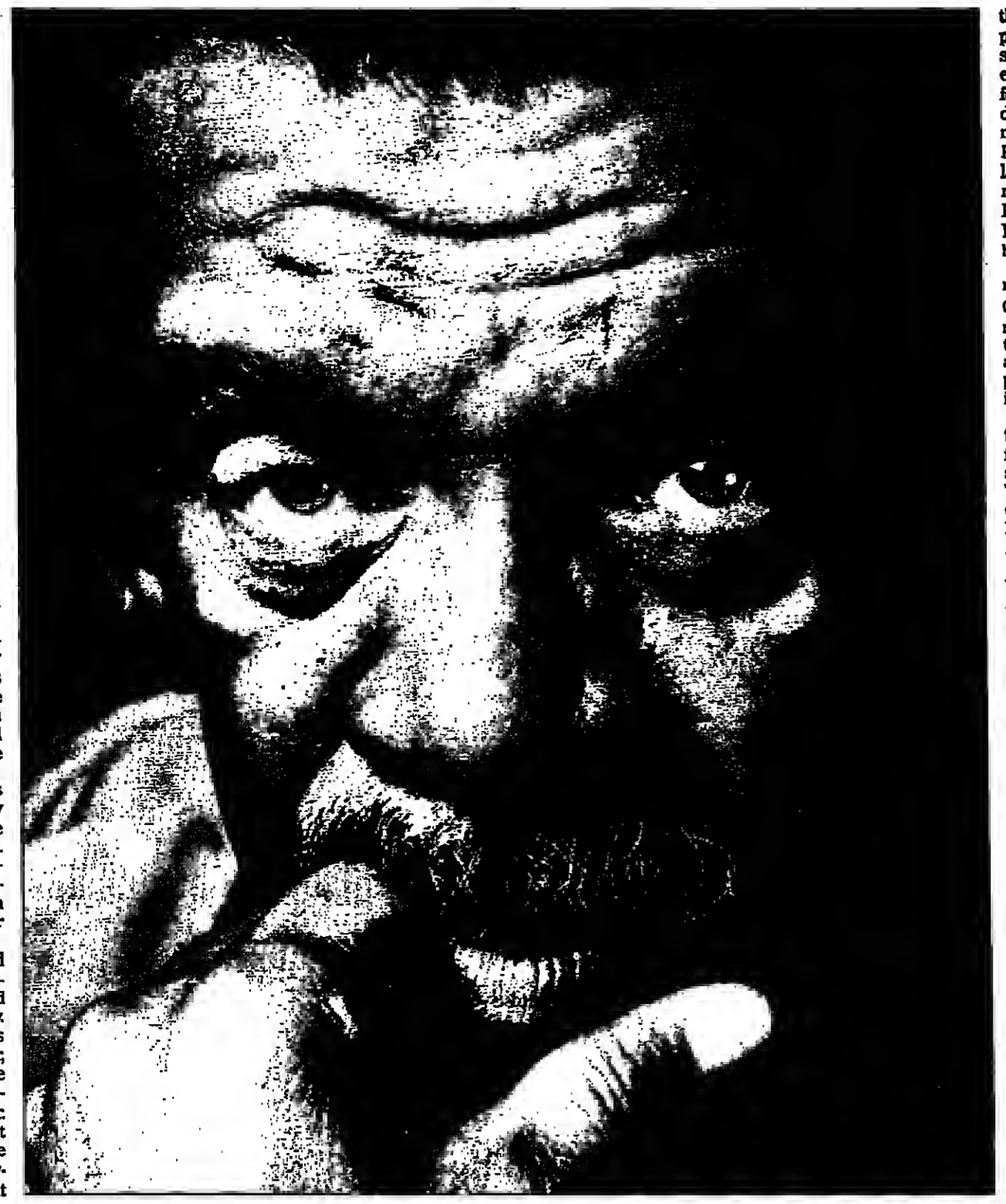
He leans forward. "Just recently, a guy was playing a shac-shac [a kind of maraca made from a gourd with seeds] in a band in St Lucia and I was looking at that guy's face, and I was saying, *that's* why I'm here, that's what I want to do. I want to have that guy's face – a black guy, with beautiful creases in his face, you know, and wearing a hat, and a kind of serenity on his face, playing the shac-shac, and the creases on his face. Not to paint it, not just to say, 'to paint it would be good', but to feel it. That's why I'm here. I'm here for this man's face."

The older you get, Walcott says, the stronger you know what your roots are. "That happened to Ted. Ted just developed a deeper and deeper love of England. It just got deeper as he got older. And that's what's great in him." I think of Eliot's poem to the Commonwealth war dead, which opens with the line "A man's destination is his own village". Destination, it says, is not the same as destiny.

When I leave, the street is dark and awash with a tropical-strength downpour, but cold. Walcott has to miss Hughes's funeral, but Seamus Heaney is coming to London for it and they have a night at the same hotel, sharing memories. Those who heard Hughes, Heaney and Walcott read together a few years ago at Stratford's Swan Theatre are unlikely to forget it.

The next day a car will whisk Walcott to receive an honorary degree at Warwick University. He will sleep as a sodden England wheels by. But once there, refreshed, he greets old friends like Odysseus in the underworld. He addresses 700 young people with the wit and gravity of the gifted teacher that he is, and reads them "Spoiler's Return", with its sparky fusion of calypso and classical satire, as well as the heart-rending poem "Sea Canes".

It begins "Half my friends are dead", and begs "give me them back, as they were... with faults and all", but then moves on to the wisdom that "out of what is lost grows something stronger". Out of what is lost, and what is held, Derek Walcott's words still go from strength to strength.



DEREK WALCOTT, A BIOGRAPHY

Born in St Lucia in 1930, Derek Walcott and his twin brother Roderick were brought up by their mother, a schoolteacher. Their father, an amateur poet and painter, died when they were a year old. He has published 18 volumes of poetry, including two epics, *Another Life* (1973) and *Omeros* (1990). He graduated in Jamaica and studied theatre in New York, then returned to the Caribbean to found and direct the Trinidad Theatre Workshop from 1959. He has written some 40 plays, and several screenplays. In 1992, the RSC staged *The Odyssey*, and this year his collaboration with Paul Simon, *The Capeman*, opened in New York. He is now Professor of Poetry at Boston University. His honours include the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry in 1988 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992. He has three children and three grandchildren.

COVER STORIES

DESPITE THE presence of Irish PM Bertie Ahern and two of his predecessors, there was a refreshing lack of formality when Hodder launched Helen Burke's and Olivia O'Leary's biography of Mary Robinson in Dublin. The former Irish President (now UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) was detained in Geneva and might have been embarrassed by the praise heaped on her by Ahern – who ran the campaign of Brian Lenihan, Robinson's opponent for the post. However, President Robinson's own easy informality did not always please the Brits. When Prince Charles visited her, royal protocol demanded that security personnel be present during his private lunch. Robinson said no, and HRH had to settle for one security man on the other side of the corridor.

NEXT SPRING, one of O'Leary's fellow *Newsnight* presenters will also make a début between hard covers. Francine Stock has opted for fiction: *A Foreign Country* (due from Chatto) is about a TV journalist whose coverage of a war in the former Soviet Union brings his aged mother face to face with her past.

NO ONE could have failed to shed a tear at this week's *Talking Heads*, with Thora Hird waiting for death in an old people's home. Alan Bennett's real-life humanity is captured in *The Lady in the Van*, his account of the elderly lady who, for 15 years, lived in his Camden drive. It is now to be published as a stand-alone paperback from the doughty independent Profile Books, who made Bennett's *The Clothes They Stood Up In* a bestseller. Small wonder that the firm, set up by Andrew Franklin after his ousting from Hamish Hamilton, has seen turnover hit £1m within its second year.

ONE OF Scotland's most notorious former prisoners is set to make headlines again. Jimmy Boyle, who met the psychiatrist who became his wife in the celebrated Special Unit at Barlinnie, has written a novel, *Hero of the Underworld*. Fuelled by his anger at the treatment of former prisoners and the failure of care in the community, it is brutally realistic – so much so that his friend Helena Kennedy begged him not to publish it. The version that Serpent's Tail are to issue in February is, apparently, heavily edited. Even so, it's not for anyone with a weak stomach.

GOOD NEWS for those who enjoyed Olivia Goldsmith's novel and the much-hyped subsequent film, *The First Wives Club*. The feisty novelist is at work on a sequel, *Wives Again*.

THE LITERATOR

Swinging trickster digs deep in the heart of Dixie

How many more outrageous comic epics can a 67-year-old expect to write? **John Sutherland** worries that Tom Wolfe has saved the best till last

MY MAIN anxiety about *A Man in Full* is actuarial. Wolfe published his first novel, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, in 1987 when he was 56. This, his second, has appeared at the age of 67. I can think of no other novelist who has started so late, so well, and so slowly. And, alas, Wolfe is not what the insurance companies would call a "good life": he has already had his first serious heart attack.

Despite having taken up fiction at a time when his doctors might well have prescribed nine-hole golf, Wolfe has an uncanny knack: it is what one might call third-age cool. With space-suited Glenn in orbit and vanilla-suited Wolfe at the top of the bestseller list (combined score, 144 years), this must be the year of the swinging old geezer.

A Man in Full makes the polemical point (uttered ex-cathedra by Wolfe in 1989) that the modern novel, like the legendary winky-wanky bird, has gone round in ever smaller circles, eventually disappearing up its own modernity. The genre needs, in Wolfe's analysis, to re-root in its coarse subsoil: the realist novel of the 19th century. And it must address itself not to the mandarins but to the REM generation.

The novel centres on a 60-year-old Atlanta real-estate developer. Charlie Croker has a trophy second wife ("a boy with breasts", his first wife cattily thinks) and a business going belly-up. He owes over half-a-billion to his bank. What saves him?

The stoic philosophy of Epictetus – another old geezer with the right stuff.

A Man in Full has the same shape and narrative routines as *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. The building-block of Wolfe's fiction is the riff. Each chapter revolves around a single vivid episode: Charlie Croker, for example, superintending the mating of his stud stallion First Draw with a luckless brood mare. "Smash! – the stallion came crashing down on the mare's back and drove his enormous penis toward her yawning vulva. The very ground shook beneath Charlie and his band of guests. The quake rattled their innards. The planets collided. The earth wobbled. Sex! Lust! Desperate! Irresistible!" Within the large riff are smaller riffs; typically, a kind of stream-of-consciousness technique marked by ellipses, capitals and exclamations.

A Man in Full
by Tom Wolfe
Jonathan Cape, £20, 742pp

The young hero (Arrian to Charlie's Epictetus) is Conrad Hensley. By a crazy series of events which begin with a parking ticket, Conrad finds himself in the "house" (prison) about to be "turned out" (gang raped) by the "Nordic Bund" (white supremacists). Comedy and horror mix, as they typically do in Wolfe. What saves Conrad from a fate worse than ten deaths? The philosophy of Epictetus and an act of God, specifically Zeus (don't ask).

A Man in Full is a more accomplished effort than *The Bonfire of the Vanities*; Wolfe integrates his narrative better. Yet this novel, like its predecessor, is crammed with incidental goodies, vast cargoes of information caught by Wolfe's journalist eye. We learn what it is like to work in a food-factory freezer unit, so cold that snot icicles droop from your nostrils. And we learn why it is black kids in the 'hood wear baggy pants: "in prison they don't provide belts, and so if your pants are too big you let them ride down".

Contemplating Wolfe's career, one is driven to ask why, at this late age, he has turned to fiction. As a literary vein, the New Journalism is far from worked out (what Wolfe could do with the Lewinsky affair!). The reason, one suspects, is that the novel is the last literary territory where you can write freely (and irresponsibly) about forbidden topics. And the "radioactive" topic is, of course, race.

The plot of *A Man in Full* derives clearly enough from the OJ circus. A running back at Georgia Tech, Fareek "Cannon" Fanon, is accused of raping a white businessman's daughter. He may have done it. But there is a complicating Desiree Washington/Mike Tyson aspect to the crime. She voluntarily went to his room, as had many other white groupies, under no illusions.

Vanilla suit, but no fudge from Tom Wolfe *Keith Dobney*

Only when surprised by her (white) girlfriends with her panties round her ankles did she indicate any alarm. Fifty years ago in Atlanta, of course, there is no question what would have happened: a good, old-fashioned lynching. 1997 is something else.

Fanon is defended by a Johnny Cochran-style lawyer, Roger White. Nicknamed "Roger Too-White", he is a "beige half-brother", a "wannabe" (as Spike Lee labelled light-complexioned African Americans in his film *School Daze*). Fanon, by contrast, is a moronic thug from the Hood with diamonds in his ears and half a hundredweight of gold round his neck. He is a very black black ("a jigaboo", to use Spike Lee's other term).

Fanon is no role model for black youth. But Tech needs him for their fund drive. As the football team goes, so do the donations, and Fanon is an All-American, in line for the Heisman Trophy. The black mayor is locked in an election battle with a rival, blacker than he is, and needs a "cause" to bring in the ghetto vote (African Americans make up 75 per cent of Atlanta's inner-city electorate).

Plotting is not Wolfe's forte, and the Fanon business is simply a way of getting to the novel's principal concern. This is the race crisis in America that no white writer outside the licensed area of fiction even dare allude to – let alone be funny about. Comedy, of an outrageous kind, is ensured by Wolfe's choice of hero.

Charlie Croker is, by all the canons of political correctness, a lost cause. He cannot restrain himself from almost saying "Nigra" when discussing his "boys" on his 29,000-acre plantation "Turp'mtime". Croker believes in the "big swinging dick" theory of life. Testosterone is what made America great (a recurrent theme in Wolfe, going back to *The Right Stuff*). As it happens, although the novel does not linger on the irony, Charlie raped his future wife on their first date. It's a man thing, we understand. Wolfe's cleverest trick is to make the reader actually like this unreconstructed monster.

Fiction and rap music are the only places where the creative artist can now freely use the N-word, and ponder all the baggage that it brings with it. In *A Man in Full*, Wolfe splatters it around with Mark Fuhrman-like profusion, often putting it in the mouths of otherwise sympathetic characters (the luckless father of the not-raped girl, for example). Doubtless Wolfe will be attacked for his insensitivity (as *The Bonfire of the Vanities* was attacked). But the central contention of the novel is, I think, incontrovertible. Race relations in American are at boiling point and one of the ways to take them off the boil is comedy. Rap probably helps, as well.

In some ways, the novel is reminiscent of Warren Beatty's new film, *Bulworth*. There, a white politician has a nervous breakdown. The "bizarre" symptom is that, for the first time in his life, he tells the truth about race relations in America. Beatty's film dissolves into liberal fudge: Bulworth solves the drug problem in LA by buying black kids ice-cream, "dissing" the LAPD, and having it off with a beautiful (light-complexioned) African American who is half his age.

Wolfe avoids the easy solutions, the "happy ever afters" which, traditionally, fiction has used to disembarrass itself. *A Man in Full* ends with a tart cynicism: the Thackerayan "amari aliquid", or touch of bitterness. This is, indubitably, a long novel. It is also, I think, a great American novel about a big American mess.

COVER STORIES

of Dixie

A little more than kin

Do we care if the Swan of Avon had mother trouble? **Peter Holland** on facts behind the acts

Shakespeare: a life
by Park Honan
Oxford University Press, £25, 450pp

A 16th-century performance of 'Twelfth Night' given in the yard of an inn, engraving by Swain *Mary Evans*

Ben Jonson couldn't see the point of looking at pictures of Shakespeare. You might get a good likeness, but no artist stood a chance of drawing the wit. And so, "reader, look/ Not on his picture but his book". If that was good advice for people looking at the great dome of the egghead on the title page of the First Folio, it might be a warning for people reading a biography as well, even one as good as Park Honan's.

After all, what is a Shakespeare biography for? Nicholas Rowe, who wrote the first in 1709, knew that there were already some people who thought they were a waste of time because "the works of Mr Shakespeare may seem to many not to want a comment"; but he still put forward the traditional argument that "the knowledge of an author may sometimes conduce to the better understanding his book".

Park Honan has all the advantages of the latest research – his and others' – on various dusty documents, and his own immense experience of writing biographies of other authors such as Jane Austen and Matthew Arnold. But I do not think there is a single moment in his whole book which "conduced" to my better understanding Shakespeare's "book". What Honan does manage is rather unfashionable and surprising. He makes of the works a way of understanding the man. Usually cautiously, though occasionally outrageously, Honan tries to see what the plays and poems might reveal about the man from Stratford.

If Stratford's flagging tourist industry were capable of being boosted by a biography, then Honan should end up with the Freedom of the Borough. For his Shakespeare is very much the "man from Stratford". The town busties back into life and its citizens take on palpable existence under Honan's watchful eye. Their wills and bonds, court records and council orders, provide tiny nuggets not only of fact but also of implication.

When Thomas Whittington, once shepherd to Richard Hathaway, Anne's father, left to "the poor people of Stratford" 40 shillings "that is in the hand of Anne Shakespeare", Honan uses the bequest to build up an image of Anne as a woman who can be trusted to look after the shepherd's money. When Shakespeare bought New Place in 1597, the great house in Stratford, Honan makes much of its blood-boltered past.

One previous owner had poisoned his daughter in 1563, and another would be poisoned by his son two months after the sale to Shakespeare, sufficient for Honan to argue that such events "familiarised" Shakespeare "with the raw, primitive theme of family murder". The two murderers, William Bott and Fulke Underhill, become another trace of the materials out of which Shakespeare fashioned *Hamlet*.

Bookish scholars have worked hard for centuries to make Shakespeare as book-bound as themselves. Honan creates for us a Shakespeare who feeds off his life and the experiences of Stratford's community.

Sometimes, the attempts push at the limits of credibility. The great mystery of why Shakespeare's Sonnets, which were almost certainly written in the 1590s, should unexpectedly get published in 1609 now has a new solution: Shakespeare waited until after the death of his beloved mother in 1608 so that she would not be upset by the poems' revelations.

That serves as a triumphal conclusion to the relationship that for Honan mattered most in Shakespeare's life. The baby William was, apparently, devotedly looked after by his mother as the plague raged in Stratford – a sheer guess about how mothers might have reacted to plague in a society with high infant mortality. I suppose it could be said of almost any man that "the most tangled and contradictory of his relationships was always with his mother".

Honan has to put in a defensive "one suspects", since he has only his own inferences on which to base the argument. But he follows it with a statement that tries to face both ways at that complex juncture between life and writing: "his troubled attitudes to women are too deep to be of anything but early origin".

I guess that Honan means that the plays show these "troubled attitudes" in profusion, because there is precious little evidence of them elsewhere, apart from that enigmatic bequest to Anne of the second-best bed. But the whole idea rests on two very arguable assumptions: that the plays show troubled attitudes to women, and that those attitudes are Shakespeare's own.

If Honan's attempts to lie Shakespeare down on a psychoanalytic couch don't ring true, this is a small price to pay for the excellence elsewhere. The assertive way in which Honan tries to probe Shakespeare's mind sits oddly beside his usual careful hesitancy.

Nicholas Rowe had so few facts at his disposal in 1709 that he could pretty much say what he liked. Park Honan has so many more that he needs to be more wary. But, at his best, Honan looks again at the evidence and comes up with convincing new solutions.

He is especially cautious, though, when he charts an "alternative narrative" for those lost years in the 1580s. He sets out the option that Shakespeare was the "William Shakeshaft" who worked as a schoolteacher with the Catholic family at Hoghton Tower in Lancashire. It is a neat theory, and the circumstantial evidence for it is building all the time. But we will never know the answer.

For Rowe, "some little account of the man himself" seemed a proper accompaniment to his edition of the plays. Park Honan never quite decides whether the plays ought to be the accompaniment to his fairly large biography. But, whichever way round the two should go, *Shakespeare: a life* is the very best biography around of the man himself. It is a convincing demonstration of how much can be recovered of an individual's life, and of how little can be known of his thoughts.

Professor Peter Holland is Director of the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

Playing away from home

Alice Thomas Ellis asks if male politicians need more mistresses

Adultery & Other Diversions
by Tim Parks
Secker & Warburg £12.99, 156pp

THIS BOOK is something like the written equivalent of "thinking aloud", at once discursive and intuitive. It is a series of meditations on what Jack Trevor Story called "orsorafings" and the style is catching like a distinctive voice. A speaker engaged in a similar enterprise would precede the anecdotes with, "It was last Tuesday – no, I tell a lie. It was...", but happily the discipline of having to write it down prevents too many irritating diversions. The author's mind wanders, but we are pleased to follow him off the beaten track of linear thought into those misty, tangled areas where, in truth, we all spend much of our time without usually mentioning it to anyone else unless we are slightly drunk.

He makes his intentions clear on the first page: "My hope when I began work on these odd hybrids was rather to dramatise an intimate relation between reflections that are timeless and ongoing stories of our lives." Every idea here expressed, he tells us, he has since found in the writings of two centuries or even two millennia ago. This is oddly reassuring and a reminder of the value of reading. If we are struck by what seems to us a novel idea, we only have to spend some time in the library to find it described by someone else.

On a trip to present a petition to the European Parliament, a woman spoke of the politicians' sexual peccadilloes ("There were those who claimed that the Parliament only moved back and forth every month so that the men could get away from their regular mistresses for the week"), which caused Tim Parks to remember how, in Plato's *Republic*, Socrates suggested "that those who distinguished themselves in public life should be rewarded by being able to sleep with more women. This would ensure that the greater number of babies were born to the better sort." Now that is a truly novel idea not, I think, current today.

Still in the European Parliament, he was amused by the Meditation Room, a space trying desperately not to resemble a chapel, apologetic, amorphous. He is good on Europe, pointing out that the Community arose only as a last resort, fuelled not by enthusiasm but by a fearful necessity and a weary economic opportunism: another of those things which everyone knows but few say aloud.

The book begins and ends as the title promises with tales of adultery. "Clearly it is very exciting when you start destroying everything." In the last piece, establishing the difference between fidelity and faith in football and in love, he conflates the two passions, reflecting on his own fidelity to the Yellow-blues which endures without faith that they will ever be successful. At the same time he considers the case of his friend Giorgio, who is planning to leave his wife for his secretary. "It's insulting", says the author's own wife, "the way you keep comparing Marina and Giorgio's troubles to the football season". "I only do that," he replies engagingly, "because it's the only way you'll let me talk about football."

His method, which consists largely in effortlessly avoiding the accepted view, is particularly effective in the section on Charity. He quotes Roberto Calasso: "With La Fayette the alliance between Good Causes and Stupidity is signed and sealed. From now on, those who seek the good of Mankind will share a crude, imprecise, warm-hearted, obtuse, emphatic vision of men." Parks adds that the "post-Christian enterprise of substituting God with man becomes problematic if we forget to have as high an opinion of the latter as we once entertained of the former", while in Maturity he writes of his children and of appetence, that yearning which the Welsh call *hiraeth*. There are 13 pieces, all worth lingering over, leaving you with the feeling you might have if you'd spent the night drinking on a warm café terrace discussing with some well-disposed intellectuals the meaning of everything.

Chips with everything

Jonathan Sale enjoys some sparkling wit from a flat country

A Tall Man in a Low Land: some time among the Belgians
by Harry Pearson
Little, Brown, £9.99, 246pp

THE TOURIST board had better rewrite that ad campaign. Instead of the hesitant "Belgium – It's Slightly Different", the nation should flaunt itself with "Somewhat More Amusing" or, indeed, "Absolutely Falling About." Harry Pearson, the author of *Racing Pigs and Giant Marrows*, has now journeyed to our near neighbour and returned with something to declare.

On the face of it, there are not too many laughs in Belgium, particularly since it is turning out to be a world leader in serial child-killers. Pearson, though, grants it a high chortle factor. He discovers a beer called Delirium Tremens. He can't get a word in edgeways – in conversation with a Trappist monk. He gives us a taste of the International Museum of Cakes and Icing. In a *friterie* he is served by a woman who appeared to have spent a considerable time in her own fryer – "the face that launched a thousand chips".

He learns that Adolphe Sax, Belgian inventor of the saxophone, also designed a mortar which could fire a shell 11 yards wide and 550 tons in weight. He gives credit to the Walloons (French-speakers) who invented pigeon-racing. He gets a cheap laugh by crediting the Flemish (Dutch-speakers) with the invention of "finch sport", which involves counting birds' chirrups.

Serious travellers may dismiss Pearson as a member of the "There's a foreigner – let's giggle" brigade. He might retort that he allows the foreigners, if not the last laugh, at least the penultimate snigger by, for example, ordering a chip sandwich (a gastronomic atrocity unknown in the area) from Our Lady of the *Friterie*. Still, at least his French was up to it on that occasion: "The number of times I have gone into a little grocery store to buy toilet paper and come out with an apple and frangipani tart are beyond counting," he confesses. "And it is no substitute, believe me."

A more substantial defence would be that the country seems a great deal more interesting by the end of the book than it did at the beginning. What the hell: Pearson's main excuse is that he is really funny. Do not read this book in a public place – especially if the public place happens to be in Belgium. Pricking the Walloon, as it were.

A blaze behind the screen

A WEEK IN BOOKS

BOYD TONKIN

Could a poet pack your cinema? Tony Harrison wants to

WITH HIS voice of thunder, Ted Hughes spoke for Deep England. Before him, in the Laureateship lists, the warbling flute of John Betjeman piped up for Middle England (always excepting Slough). Next time, if talent by itself could fix the choice, the job might pass to the greatest living cheerleader for Visionary England – to the rebel bard who occupies the rugged turf where Blake, Milton and Shelley stood.

Of course, it's most improbable that Tony Harrison would ever want to wear any court flunkey's outfit, however loose. Besides, the spin doctors would mark down the mischief-making Yorkshire classicist on every count. To any chaser of suburban votes, he seems both too posh (in terms of prosody and allusion) but too defiantly plebeian as well: a scholar and a scally, all at once.

Yet, watching the première of his *Prometheus* at the London Film Festival earlier this week, it struck me that Harrison's work for screen and stage already amounts to a hugely rich corpus of public verse. In addition to the stunning theatre adaptations that began with *The Mysteries* for the National, his ten film-poems for television fuse word and image to illumine a vast array of subjects from blasphemy to Alzheimer's, from the hooligan violence of *v.* to the post-Communist confusion of *A Maybe Day in Kazakhstan*. No topic, however dry or difficult, can elude his clangorous diction and fiendishly cunning rhymes.

In *Prometheus*, Harrison has for the first time directed as well as scripted a film. A feature, not a direct TV commission, it now has to find the cinema exposure it deserves before an eventual small-screen outing on Channel 4. Next week, Faber publishes the screenplay (£8.99), with an idea-stacked essay that explains Harrison's long fascination with the myth of the flame-stealer who liberated mankind – which dates from the days when young Tony "learned to dream awake before the coal-fire in our living room".

Setting out from the social and physical wreckage of the forsaken South Yorkshire coalfield, the film – and the nimble octosyllabic couplets of its script – crosses Europe to explore the meaning of the Titan's theft of fire from Zeus. The frame for this voyage, from Hull through bomb-blasted Dresden to pollution-poisoned Romania and Greece, lies in an abandoned cinema. Here, Zeus's supercilious enforcer Hermes (Michael Feast) trades political insults and barbed verses with a wheezing retired pitman (Walter Sparrow). For Harrison, the half-inched benefits of fire imply not just energy and manufacture but – above all – humanity's creative insubordination. As the fag-toting miner chortles to Hermes, "Disobloody-bedience got us over t'barbed wire fences of Jehovah".

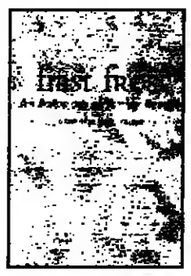
Cloth-capped but silver-tongued, Harrison can transcend the dull duality that forever sets Pop against Posh, Dylan against Keats (subject of a fine Harrison poem about the classroom misery of a "wrong" accent). In his work, the arts of the study and the street clash and wrestle as Parnassus comes to Pontefract – but they never once merge into middlebrow pap. For that reason, *Prometheus* ought to burn bright in your local multiplex as well as in art-houses. This poet belongs in the Palais, if not in the Palace.

PAPERBACKS

BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

Joe Gould's Secret by Joseph Mitchell, *Vintage, £6.99, 186pp*

ABSOLUTELY NOT to be missed, these two absorbing essays, about a bohemian who was eccentric even by Manhattan standards, date from the heyday of the *New Yorker*. In 1942, Mitchell profiled Gould, aka Professor Seagull, a bearded weirdo who enlivened literary shindigs with hirdcalls and claimed to be writing a limitless oral history. Twenty-two years later, Mitchell returned to the same topic. In some ways, the amazing truth about Gould recalls Stephen King's *The Shining*. Sympathetic and patient, Mitchell was a giant of journalism. His classic collection, *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon*, equally cries out for reprinting.



First Frost edited by Charlotte Cole, *The Women's Press, £8, 198pp*

EXTREMES IN weather seem to bring out the best in writers, and Charlotte Cole's anthology of winter readings includes some real goodies. Set in a chilly Montreal, Carol Shields's story "Chemistry" explores the emotional configurations of an Early Music recorder group; while Margaret Atwood's story of a boozy work lunch is set against an urban winterscape of blowy subways and dingy bars. Closer to home, Ali Smith remembers Scottish school days, and a Christmas concert; and A L Kennedy's mischievous story "Cap O'Rushes" recounts how a wife leaves her "goblin husband" after a bout of flu.

Questioning the Millennium by Stephen Jay Gould, *Vintage, £6.99, 190pp*

USED TO probing aeons of geological time, Gould now turns his gaze on a mere 6,000 years. This is the age of the universe according to Archbishop Usher, who claimed everything came into being at noon on 23 October, 4004 BC. Gould notes that upheavals caused by millennarians range from the Peasants' Revolt to the Battle of Wounded Knee. The confusion over whether we should party on 31 December 1999 or a year later is due to a sixth-century monk called Dionysius Exiguus (Little Dennis), who miscalculated the birth of Christ by four years and forgot about the year zero. Bringing a light touch to such weighty topics, Gould is a class act.

In Search of the Impotent Man by Gaby Hauptmann, *Virago, £9.99, 312pp*

IMPOTENT GERMANS may not sound much of a turn-on – possibly even dangerous – but Hauptmann somehow makes these leiderhosened lotharios interesting. Unlike Bridget Jones, German insurance broker Carmen Legg has a satisfactory sex life. A red-haired *über*-babe with a BMW and long legs, Carmen's only problem is keeping the men away. Fed up with the their over-enthusiastic demands, she takes out a lonely hearts ad for an intelligent, but impotent lover. Not rising to the occasion are a Bavarian count and a balding giant. The style isn't great, but the Teutonic setting gives the sex an interesting edge.

Philip of Spain by Henry Kamen, *Yale, £9.95, 384pp*

ACCLAIMED FOR its scholarship, this first full biography of Mary I's consort is also wonderfully readable, from the oddly familiar account of his youth ("it is difficult to believe that Philip had any real experience of childhood or domestic affection") to his gruesome death. Bogged down in psperwork, Philip applied his passion for accountancy to his vast collection of relics: 10 whole bodies, 144 heads, 306 limbs... Though he abandoned Spain's "refreshing absence of repression", Philip encouraged the Inquisition for political not spiritual reasons. Scotching long-established myths, Kamen has produced a penetrating portrait of a driven man.

Tourist by Matt Thorne, *Sceptre, £6.99, 233pp*

THE TWINKLING arcades of Western-Super-Mare provide the backdrop to Matt Thorne's accomplished first novel. When ex-student Sarah lands herself a job selling neon displays to local businessmen, she also ends up a regular visitor to her boss's marital bed. She's also sleeping with an old man called Henry, but is coming to like Neil, her summer student help. Occupying an emotional no-man's land between *Rita, Sue and Bob Too* and *Wish You Were Here*, Thorne describes sex, boredom and a lifetime of morning-afters in a British seaside town. Particularly good on girls' nights out.

Voices from the Great War edited by Peter Vansittart, *Pimlico, £10, 303pp*

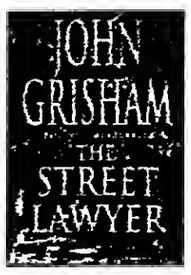
THIS ENTHRALLING scrapbook illuminates unexpected facets of a conflict where mechanised armies meshed like locked gears. The chivalry which led so many to volunteer can also be seen in the wreaths dropped by Allied aviators on the airfield of a dead German ace and the fags and chocolate thrown by Tommies to German POWs in 1918. The word pictures of Mayakovsky and Apollinaire remind us that the First World War was the birthplace of modernism. But it is the horrific images of Owen ("Gas! Quick boys! An ecstasy of fumbling") and Kipling ("eye-pecking gulls") which haunt the mind.

Angel Bird by Sanjida O'Connell, *Black Swan £6.99 283pp*

EVERYTHING A GIRL could wish for in a novel: good food, good scenery and kissing in the stables. Niall is a Cambridge-trained zoologist who decamps to rural Northern Ireland to study the mating patterns of magpies. But as he roams the country round his new home, he is distracted by another kind of local inhabitant: Eddie, a dope-smoking vegetarian cook and Nadia, a raven-haired beauty (who likes to dress up in scarlet cloaks). Winner of a Betty Trask Award for her first novel *Theory of Mind*, O'Connell tempers her vivid prose with a sensible helping of well-explained science.

Confessions of a Wine Lover by Jancis Robinson, *Penguin, £7.99, 376pp*

SHE IS a beautiful high-flyer, a non-pareil in her field, ceaselessly productive. She wins over the sniffy proprietor of Cheval Blanc by identifying the two vintages served at dinner (1971 and 1964). With so much going for her, Jancis Robinson should be intolerable. Sorry, but this memoir is irrisistibly charming. No wonder that in just two years, 1975 to 1977, Robinson rose from Hirondelle to Chateau Petrus '45. She has kippers and Krug with Arlott; Coppola pitches a deal while she samples his own-label Zinfandel ("hearty and gutsy"). The same goes for this sparkling book.



The Street Lawyer by John Grisham, *Century, £10, 348pp*

THE GIANT Washington law firm Drake and Sweeny has everything an ambitious young lawyer could want (except Ally McBeal). But then a homeless person drops into the company's offices with a gun, and blows his head off in the oak-panelled conference room. A Grisham novel with an agenda (rich people should help the homeless), it tells the story of Michael, three years away from partnership, who witnesses the head-blowing incident and downshifts for a new career in legal aid. Never a hair out of place, or a sentence too many. Grisham sets the world to rights, if not alight.

SPOKEN WORD

CHRISTINA HARDYMENT

The Last Goon Show of All
BBC, 2hrs, £8.99; CD £11.99

THE STAR of the show at this year's Talkies awards, the Oscars of the Spoken Word industry, was Spike Milligan, who accepted the award for *The Last Goon Show of All*. Stephen Fry was also given an award for his own reading of his unabridged autobiography *Moab is My Washpot* (Random House), as was Derek Jacobi, Performer of the Year, and Anne Fine, whose *Tulip Touch* (Puffin) won the children's fiction award. Hugh Laurie's *Three Men in a Boat* won the award for abridged classic fiction and Liza Ross's magnificent marathon *Gone With the Wind* (Chivers) the award for unabridged classic fiction. *Travels With My Aunt* (BBC) won abridged modern fiction, *The Third Man* (MCI) best film adaptation. *Diana – a dedication in seven ages* (Naxos) won the poetry award and Carole Boyd's reading of *The God of Small Things* (Isis) won for unabridged modern fiction. David Rintoul's reading of *Culloden* won non-fiction; Bernard Cribbins's *Sophie is Seven* (Cover to Cover) children's pre-school, and Victoria Wood's *Live 1997* (Penguin) contemporary comedy. The two top awards reflected the achievement of those who take up the challenge of writing for audio. Tom Wolfe's *Ambush at Fort Bragg* (BBC), read by Frank Muller was Talkie of the Year, and Alan Bennett won the award for outstanding achievement. The winning titles are available by mail order (0171-491 4117) from the Talking Book Shop, Wigmore Street, London W1.

ERRATA

by Felia Bennett

ROBERT REDFORD, THE STAR OF THE FILM VERSION OF THIS BOOK, SAID THAT COMING ACROSS IT WAS LIKE FINDING A NUGGET IN A MOUND OF DUNG.

BESTSELLERS

Even the combined sales of this week's top three fiction titles (and that includes *Carpe Jugulum*, Terry Pratchett's latest instalment in his Discworld chronicle, straight in at number one) can't rival Delia's ever-increasing weekly sales: 25,542 at the last count and doubtless still rising. Meanwhile, Sebastian Faulks's appearance on prime-time TV describing his first encounter with the chateau that forms the backdrop to *Charlotte Gray* has sent him five places up the fiction list. *Compiled from the data supplied on sales over seven days ending 8 November 1998.* © Bookwatch Ltd, 1998

ORIGINAL FICTION

	TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (-)	**Carpe Jugulum**	Terry Pratchett (Doubleday)	16,439	£16.99
2 (2)	**Amsterdam**	Ian McEwan (Cape)	3,575	£14.99
3 (8)	**Charlotte Gray**	Sebastian Faulks (Hutchinson)	3,010	£16.99
4 (4)	**The Path of Daggers**	Robert Jordan (Orbit)	2,935	£17.99
5 (6)	**Rainbow Six**	Tom Clancy (M Joseph)	2,828	£16.99
6 (10)	**Field of 13**	Dick Francis (M Joseph)	2,787	£6.99
7 (7)	**Tara Road**	Maeve Binchy (Orion)	2,766	£16.99
8 (9)	**Archangel**	Robert Harris (Hutchinson)	2,606	£16.99
9 (1)	**Point of Origin**	Patricia D Cornwell (Little, Brown)	2,563	£16.99
10 (3)	**Net Force**	Tom Clancy (Headline)	2,168	£6.99

ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

	TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	WEEKLY SALES	PRICE
1 (1)	**Delia's How to Cook**	Delia Smith (BBC)	25,542	£16.99
2 (-)	**Notes From a Big Country**	Bill Bryson (Doubleday)	7,889	£16.99
3 (2)	**The Life of Birds**	David Attenborough (BBC)	7,044	£18.99
4 (4)	**The Little Book of Calm**	Paul Wilson (Penguin)	4,232	£1.99
5 (3)	**Men Are From Mars...**	John Gray (Thorsons)	3,953	£9.99
6 (5)	**Little Book of Feng Shui**	Lillian Too (Element)	3,630	£1.99
7 (7)	**Real Food**	Nigel Slater (Fourth Estate)	3,499	£18.99
8 (9)	**Losing My Virginity**	Richard Branson (Virgin)	3,365	£20
9 (8)	**Addicted**	Tony Adams & Ian Ridley (CollinsWillow)	2,670	£16.99
10 (6)	**The Guv'nor**	Lenny McLean (Blake)	2,481	£14.99

INSPIRATIONS

JULIAN RATHBONE

The music
I love all music, but one piece I cannot do without is Beethoven's piano sonata number 15, The Pastoral: for humour, whimsy, and delight raised to the level of deep emotion, especially when played by Alfred Brendel. I want the last movement at my funeral.

The play
A Midsummer Night's Dream. I've directed schoolchildren and amateurs in it four times and I wouldn't mind doing it once a year for as long as I've got. It is a celebration, a reminder that *Homo sapiens* is not always bad news.

The place
The Alpujarras south of Granada, with the almond blossom like frozen fountains of sea-spray, or a few months later when the orange trees are in bloom and the spring snow flashing on the Sierra Nevada. Or the Plaza Mayor in Salamanca.

The film
Cinema has become a passion, but my taste remains hopelessly philistine. *The Italian Job* (directed by Peter Collinson), *Get Shorty* (Barry Sonnenfeld), and just now the smartened up re-releases of *Grease* (Randal Kleiser) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (William Keighley, Michael Curtiz).

The artwork
No contest here, ever since I saw it in the Prado in the mid-Seventies, in a smallish room, unglazed with an open window by it – it has to be Velázquez's "Las Meninas" (The Maids of Honour c1656). It has a little marble plaque beside it saying "The greatest work of art in the world."

Julian Rathbone's 'Trajectories' is published by Victor Gollancz, £16.99. He is currently writing the screenplay of 'The Last English King' (Abacus £6.99)

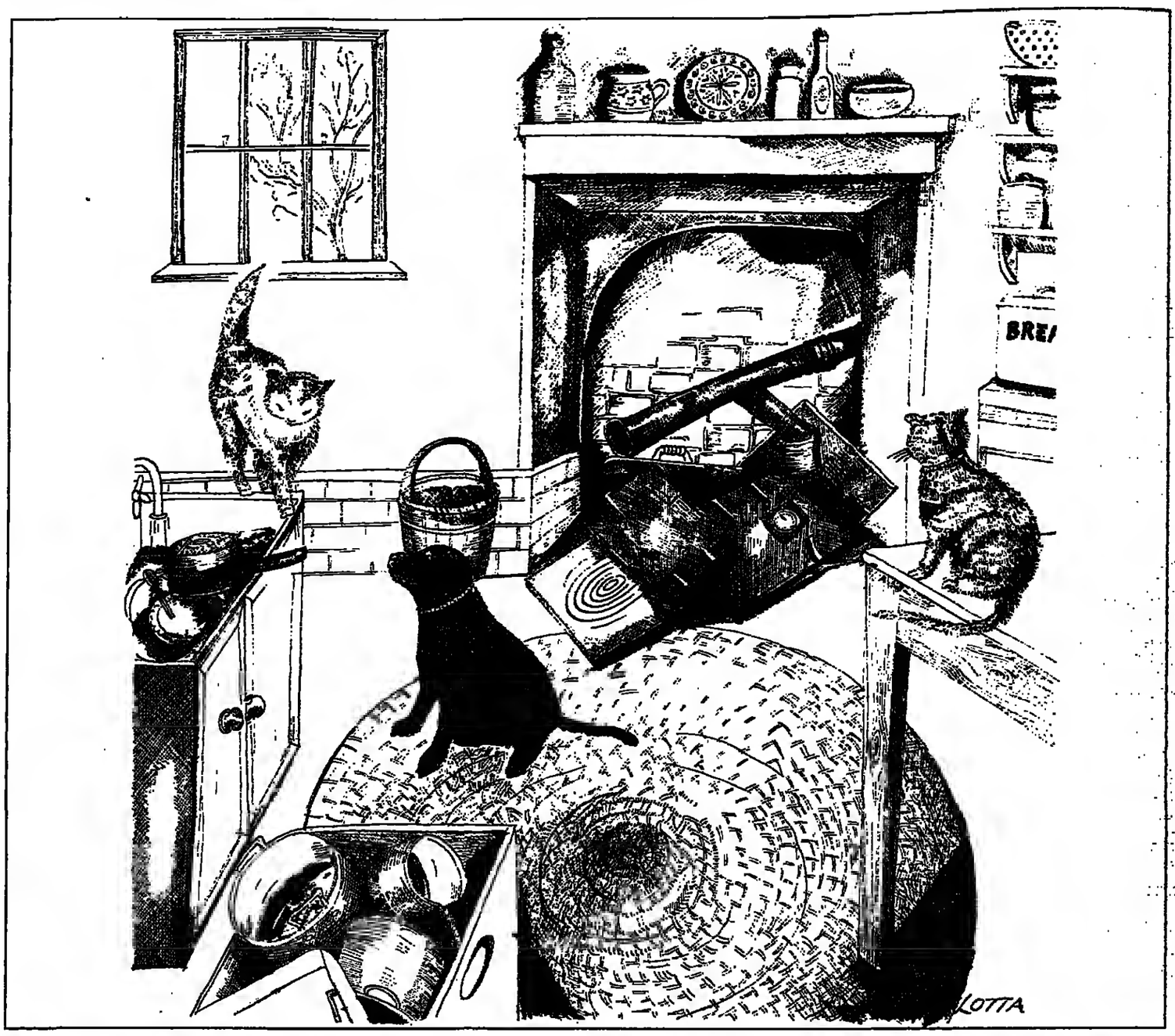
Julian Rathbone

TEL: 0171 293 2222

CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

FAX: 0171 293 2505

Secrets of an old farm kitchen



COUNTRY MATTERS

DUFF HART-DAVIS

Apart from sundry mice, which must have thought the world was ending, nobody resented the upheaval more keenly than Jasper and Rosie, our tabby cats. As I came downstairs at 6.45am, I found Jasper sitting ostentatiously on a corner of my wife's desk, radiating disapproval. The position he had taken up; his attitude; the very set of his whiskers; everything was telling me not only that the Aga had gone out, but that his favourite perch on the working surface beside it, where he likes to bake himself for hours on end, had mysteriously vanished.

As for Rosie, she was devastated to discover that her normal feeding-place, on a draining board beside the sink, had also disappeared. Timid at the best of times, she lurked about outside giving piteous yowls, unable to face the possibility of coming in and being bounced by Jemima, our boisterous young black Labrador, without the possibility of jumping on to the high shelf that normally guarantees her safety.

The cause of all this dismay was our decision to renovate the kitchen. I mentioned this project some time ago, when I discussed the rights and wrongs of throwing out the old flagstones that covered the floor. Well, by last weekend we were past worrying about niceties of conservation, and in any case we had found a buyer in the village for any slabs that survived intact.

A water-diviner who once came to dowse for streams beneath our fields sat in the kitchen and, after consulting a pendulum, announced that the house had been built in 1681. We had no evidence to contradict his estimate, and by the time we had wrenched out all the units, the room looked at least 300 years old.

We have always known that our kitchen was once the farmhouse's dairy, used for cheese-making, and the effect of clearing it was to make the slope of its floor seem even more pronounced.

Down this hill, in the old days, the farmer or his wife used to slosh buckets of water, and the fall of six inches from Aga to larder was one of the main reasons for our wanting to get things straightened out.

I awaited the lifting of the slabs with no mean excitement. Because they had sunk into various comfortable hollows, we always assumed that they had been laid directly on to earth, and now our theory was to be put to the test. There was always the chance – remote, I had to agree – that some earlier inhabitant had buried the family treasure beneath them.

The stronger and more sinister possibility was that we would find a stream flowing where we wanted to lay the concrete base for the new floor. Our neighbour, 50 yards down the hill, has been persistently troubled by just such a subterranean watercourse, which appears to flow directly from us.

Before the slabs could come up, the Aga had to go out – and until you have seen an Aga taken apart at the seams, you have not lived. I had correctly imagined heavy iron castings, but not the tangle of innards or the mass of vermiculite insulation – glittery, featherweight chips – which poured out like slippery popcorn and had to be carefully shovelled into sacks for reuse later.

The first, ceremonial lift of a slab was performed by Matt, the work-experience lad helping our builder, who got the end of his jemmy down the side of it and prised it up. Beneath it, as we expected, lay earth and clay, both fairly dry, but we were amazed by the slab's thickness – nearly 5in – and by its weight. One by one its neighbours came up, and we took them out in wheelbarrows to stack them in the yard. Thank heaven, no watercourse came to light, but, alas, also no treasure. Nevertheless the floor did harbour several curiosities.

One was a mouse's nest of some antiquity, complete with hazelnut shells black with age. Another was live roots that had infiltrated through the south wall. At first I thought these must come from the fig tree growing against the house; but when we found roots invading from the north as well, I was forced to conclude that the villain must be the big poplar on the front lawn.

If this diagnosis is correct, its implications are sinister, for the tree stands at least 30 metres from the kitchen, and its roots must have extended right round both sides of the house before penetrating the walls, so that, like a giant squid, it has the building clutched in its tentacles.

When a pneumatic chisel and a Kango road hammer were brought into play to smash the old concrete base of the Aga, the noise in the empty room became shattering. In spite of the din, Jemima had to be forcibly restrained from assisting in the excavation. The cats predictably absented themselves, fleeing to the sanctuary of the hay bales. But, come dusk, they sought to return to their usual haunts, only to find everything still in chaos.

Their persistence reminded me of the time we moved an ark-and-fold in which our chickens spent the night, from a field to the bottom of the garden – a distance of barely 100 yards. The birds seemed quite unable to appreciate that their house had shifted; so firmly hefted were they to their old territory that for night after night they went and camped on the bare hillside where the ark had stood, at the mercy of any passing fox, and as dark closed in we had to carry them in in safety one by one.

Now the cats are behaving in a similar fashion, and it is difficult to find a way of explaining to them that in two or three weeks' time the *status quo* will be restored – with the important innovation that, for the first time in its history, their playing-field will be level.

NATURE NOTES

MOST GARDENERS must wish that moles would hibernate in winter. Yet they do not such thing, but carry on as usual, throwing up heaps on the lawn.

With five toes on each front foot, and broad claws, they are powerful excavators, and dig themselves elaborate tunnel systems. Needing to eat their own weight in food every day, they live on earthworms and insect larvae that fall into their runs. Although nearly blind – able only to distinguish between light and dark – they have an acute sense of smell, and are sensitive to vibration, so that they cease digging if they hear footsteps approaching.

In spite of their rotundity, they are capable of no mean acceleration when threatened underground, or surprised in the open. What makes them distasteful to predators is the strength of their scent; foxes often kill them with a single nip, but then leave the bodies lying uneaten on the ground.

Moleskin waistcoats used to be fashionable in country districts. Full-time catchers would travel round their beat on foot, skinning victims on the move as they walked from one set of traps to the next, and selling the pelts at sixpence apiece.

Hence the creature's nickname – the gentleman in black velvet – which was coined by the Jacobites after William of Orange's horse stumbled over a molehill and it killed him.

DUFF HART-DAVIS

Floodwaters bring hope of a revival in salmon stocks

The wild waters that recently swept across Britain may have upset many people, but anglers on some of our top game-fishing rivers are not among them. By Daniel Butler

Although the human inhabitants of the Wye and Severn valleys are still cursing last month's floods, the water is a welcome boost to wild salmon. The flood waters hide the fish from predators such as otters, while increased flows ease the way to the gravel beds in the shallower streams that act as fish nurseries.

Even so, such natural boosts are not enough for the Environment Agency. Backed by alarmed fishery owners, next week it introduces strict new by-laws to force fishermen to return prized spring fish and use barbless hooks, and to ban worm and shrimp baits.

For now, however, as the autumn spawning migration gets under way, the salmon have to rely on the elements and, in spite of this October's heavy rain, fewer fish than ever will make the journey. Catches on most rivers have declined dramatically over the past two decades. On the Wye, for example, the annual spring rod catch has fallen from 4,300 in 1967 to 730 in 1997. This year John Hopkinson, chairman of the Wye Salmon Fishery Owners Association, reckons that the final tally on what was once the premier salmon river in England and Wales is between 600 and 700.

Worse, even these stark figures disguise another problem. Salmon begin life as "parr" in gravel beds in upland streams. When about a year old, the fish – now called "smolts" – migrate to the sea to feed in rich areas off Greenland. When ready to breed, at about four years old, they return to the river where they hatched.

The first, and biggest, enter freshwater in early spring and it is these fish that are prized by fly fishermen. Later in the summer the "grilse" return. These have just spent one winter at sea in shallower coastal waters, and are considerably smaller. Accordingly they are less prized by anglers, but, more important, have lower reproductive success.

Unfortunately, the proportion of grilse that fishermen have caught has been rising over recent years, reflecting their increase in the rivers. And scientific measures reinforce the worries of fishery owners. The Environment Agency has produced figures for the numbers of eggs laid in each major salmon river and these are well below what would be hoped for in healthy water.

For years falling stocks were blamed on poaching, but scientists dismiss this as relatively insignificant. The most likely cause of the current crisis is probably climatic. Ironically, in this age of fears of global warming, scientists believe the problems stem partly from a cooling of Britain's coastal waters as melting polar icecaps shift the Gulf Stream westwards. This results in poorer feeding for all marine life, but hits the predatory salmon particularly hard.

"The overall pattern is one of salmon numbers going down across the North Atlantic," says Guy Mawle, fisheries officer at the Environment Agency. "And we're particularly concerned about the larger, sea-winter salmon, whose numbers have crashed," he adds.

Naturally, fishery owners are worried. Along the Welsh border, they have formed the Wye Foundation, which tries to improve breeding habitats by removing debris blocking smaller streams and cleaning up the gravel beds where the fish spawn. It also runs a restocking programme, based on live fish donated by anglers.

Salmon are returning to once-polluted 'industrial' rivers *Telegraph Colour Library*

These are moved to a hatchery where their eggs are removed and fertilised, and most of the resulting progeny are released. These go to suitable areas where natural stocks are low or non-existent. A minority are kept back for a year, however, and released as smolts ready to migrate straight to salt water. But while such schemes may help stocks, everyone recognises that this alone will not solve the current crisis.

Another partial answer is to reduce the number of fish killed legally on the river by introducing a policy whereby anglers return fish unharmed to complete their breeding cycle. This runs counter to angling tradition, however: "Game fishing has always seen itself as akin to game shooting," explains Hopkinson. "To some people the idea of releasing a salmon that you've pitted your wits against for hours, or even days, is like shooting at pheasants with blanks. Nevertheless, it is critical that anglers should support catch-and-release; the only alternative is to close the fisheries completely."

Next week the Environment Agency will introduce by-laws forcing fishermen to release salmon caught before 16 June. After that it is up to the individual as to whether they catch-and-release, but there may be local extensions and even total bans on killing salmon.

Nevertheless, in spite of the general gloom on traditional rivers, there are rays of hope from unexpected quarters. Improved water quality on many industrial rivers has seen salmon returning to haunts abandoned 150 years ago.

The Tyne, for example, is now among the best in England, while this summer a coarse fisherman on the Don in South Yorkshire was amazed to hook a large salmon.

Even on the Wye there is hope: "We've had two cracking good floods this year and it was a wonderfully wet summer," says Hopkinson.

Meanwhile, anyone wanting to see salmon leaping should try the weirs on the Taff in central Cardiff, or the new barrage on the Tees Estuary – or contact their local Wildlife Trust.

Just why do men collect cacti?

These great survivors have outrageous flowers and are very forgiving. Yet they have little appeal to women. By Anna Pavord

Mark Pedro de la Torre is a cactus-loving potter who specialises in making shallow containers designed specifically to enhance the visual impact of low-growing cacti *Andy Fox*

"Women don't buy cacti," said the owner of our local garden centre, with great certainty. "Boys, any age from seven up. That's where the market is. We sell any amount of cacti, but never to women." I tested the theory on a horticultural wizard at Reading University. He agreed. Cacti were his first love and he guessed that at least two-thirds of his male students still collected them.

Why? Well, they are forgiving, and accept neglect without sulking. They stay where they are put. They are cheap to run... no, those can't be the real reasons. "Think of their variety," exclaims Terry Hewitt, who keeps at least 10,000 of the things at his Holly Gate Cactus Nursery in West Sussex. If you are the collecting type, there are enough curiosities here for 100 lifetimes.

They are weird because they are survivors. In inhospitable areas – desert, mostly – they are often the last plants left after all other vegetation has given up trying. Their spines provide awesome protection against grazing beasts. In high, dry places where days of extreme heat are followed by freezing cold nights, they grow long, woolly wigs. The hair insulates the core of the plant and protects it against extremes of temperature.

And, like some very old married couples, different species living in the same place start to look like each other, because they have all been buffeted by the same environmental difficulties and have overcome the same obstacles. So how do you tell your cephalocereus from your espostoa, or your coryphantha from your gymnocalycium?

If you are me, you do not. I (shamefully) use the same blanket term, "cactus", to cover everything from the tall, angular pillar cacti of every cowboy film you ever saw, to unfriendly little pincushions that think they are working hard if they put on a millimetre in five years. It is a shocking admission.

To know them, you have to grow them, says Mr Hewitt. That is true of all plants, of course, but there is less excuse for not growing cacti, since any windowsill could accommodate at least 10 of them. Beginners' plants include the haworthias, but you would never guess the kinship between the members of this particular family. Some, such as *H attenuata*, are like gasping starfish; others (*H truncata*) look like neatly sawn-off stepping-stones.

Or you could try stenocactus, which eventually grows into a vicious little hedgehog about 5in across. But then it flowers, and suddenly, out of a tangle of spines that would be classed as dangerous weapons if they were mineral rather than vegetable, comes a neat, perfect posy of pink flowers.

This flowering is brilliantly schizophrenic, like a Hell's Angel seen powdering his nose. Rebutias (another beginners' plant) do it too. They grow wild in dry, mountainous areas from Argentina to Bolivia, and are classic cacti pincushions. They are rarely more than 3in in height, but in early spring they leap into improbable bloom with flowers of red, yellow and orange. Cactus flowers seem to have no neck or stem, but sit low among the spines, serenely outrageous.

The neatest flowers are those of the mammillarias, which make a perfect coloured circle round the top of each globe, a crown among thorns. This is another huge family good for beginners. In the wild, they are widely spread, growing in Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and Honduras, but they all flower prolifically, even when very young. The first crop comes in spring, and it is often followed by a second and third flowering later on.

Many cacti are low-growing and so look their best in shallow containers. Mark Pedro de la Torre is one of the few potters in the country who make pots specifically with cacti in mind. He grows quite a few himself, displayed alongside showy succulents in the big bay window of his house in Herefordshire. Outside, sempervivums live happily in the same kind of pot. They are low and heavy with curved, doughnut rims.

The form is unusual and very kind to plants that are dumpy by nature. They are also strong, both physically (good red Staffordshire clay that won't flake or break in winter) and in the effect that they create. Garden centres have done cacti no favours by dressing them up in plastic sombreros and sunglasses. Mr de la Torre's pots restore a cactus's pride.

CACTI CONNECTIONS

MARK PEDRO de la Torre's workshop is at The Courtyard, The Old Rectory, Stoke Lacy, Herefordshire HR7 4HH (01432 820500). From 4-6 December he will be at the Contemporary Crafts Fair, Queen Charlotte Hall, Parkshot Centre, Richmond, Surrey. The fair is open from 10am-6.30pm (but closes at 5.30pm on the last day). Admission £4. His pots are also available from the Collection Gallery, Ledbury, Contemporary Ceramics, 7 Marshall Street, London W1 and Bourton House, Bourton on the Hill, Gloucs.

Terry Hewitt's nursery, Holly Gate, is at Billinghurst Road, Ashington, West Sussex RH20 3BA (01903 892930). It is open daily, 9am-5pm. Send two first-class stamps for a catalogue. A wide range of cacti and succulents is also available from Southfield Nurseries, Bourne Road, Morton, Nr Bourne, Lincs PE10 0RH (01778 570168). Open 10am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-4pm daily, by appointment only November to January. Send a first-class stamp for a catalogue.

For a comprehensive guide to the cactus family that is accessible and well illustrated, try *The Complete Book of Cacti and Succulents* by Terry Hewitt (Dorling Kindersley, £15.99). *Cacti and Succulents in Habitat* by Ken Preston-Mafham (Cassell, £10.99) gives a riveting account of what these plants can do when unconfined by pots and greenhouses.

The British Cactus and Succulent Society has more than 100 branches. For more information contact the Secretary at 15 Brentwood Crescent, York, North Yorkshire YO1 5HU (01904 410512).

CUTTINGS

NEWS FROM THE GARDENER'S WORLD

THE BRITISH Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) provides opportunities for people nationwide to get involved in conservation work and learn skills from professional instructors. The minimum age for most projects is 16. There is a busy programme for volunteers in the London area, with chainsaw practice lined up for the weekend of 28-29 November (cost £15). "Brush up your chainsaw skills with other chainsaw enthusiasts" suggests the BTCV. Their programme is printed on non-chlorine-bleached recycled paper using soya-based inks. How I wish they would turn their PC minds to ways of quietening the beastly (but necessary) chainsaw and its cousin, the strimmer. For more information about BTCV work in the London area, contact the training officer, Edward Kellow, at 80 York Way, London N1 9AG (0171-837 9137).

AUTUMN IS the best time to sow a wild-flower meadow, says the aptly named Charles Flower, who specialises in wild flowers on his Wiltshire farm. He sells seed of many native flowers, such as lady's bedstraw and purple loosestrife, but also makes up different mixes suitable for particular conditions. His clay-soil mix contains selfheal and yellow rattle; the one for chalk soils includes black knapweed and wild carrot. Wet soils are less easy to manage than chalk, but Mr Flower has a mix for that, too, with betony, tufted vetch and meadowsweet among the ingredients. Mixed batches of seed cost £40 a kilo (£45 for the wet-soil mix). Sow at a rate of three grams a square metre. Phone 01672 870782 for an informative plant list and order form.

AT SIR John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, is a major exhibition of drawings by the landscape designer, painter and architect William Kent, who died in the middle of the 18th century. He worked as an interior decorator at Kensington Palace, Chiswick House and Houghton Hall before launching into his true métier of landscape design. "There is a new taste in gardening just arisen," wrote Sir Thomas Robinson to his father-in-law, the Earl of Carlisle, in 1734, and explained the marvel of Kent's working "without either level or line". Claremont, in Surrey, and Stowe, Buckinghamshire, are partly his work. The exhibition, which marks the 250th anniversary of Kent's death, continues until 19 December. The museum is open Tues-Sat (10am-5pm). Admission £2.

In search of the instant garden: start here

Now you can buy tiny plants from seed companies. They travel by post, pot out quickly and they don't cost the earth. By Ursula Buchan

FROM THE outside, it may appear as though gardening were cosily insulated from the modern world, concerned as it is with eternal verities which transcend mere fashion. But that is not the case. All horticultural suppliers are sensitive to changes in lifestyle and circumstance, and gardeners have learnt to welcome their products with open wallets.

For some years, the larger mail-order seed suppliers have offered a range of young "plantlets" (mostly seed-raised, but also some rooted cuttings). Every year this range is given more prominence in their catalogues. Many gardeners, it seems, either are too timid or no longer have time to nurture seedlings, but have the money to pay someone else to do it.

This change has coincided with technological advances in plant breeding and rearing, and also the packaging of perishable goods. The seed firms can offer plants at a number of stages of their development as tiny "plugs", which have been grown in modular trays, as larger "plugs", or as "pot-ready" plants. For many people, this has meant the fun of caring for young plants without the need for a heated greenhouse.

Young 'plantlets' are becoming more popular *GPL*

The seed companies have been careful in their choice of plants. According to Paul Hansord of Thompson & Morgan, his firm has concentrated on plants that look good when they arrive through the post, and that perform reliably in the garden. They have plumped particularly for half-hardy annuals, such as busy lizzies (*Impatiens*), which are not always straightforward to germinate, and need to be started off early in the year – and have tended to choose varieties, such as double-flowered petunias, that are proven big sellers as seed.

On the face of it, seed looks far the cheaper option for the gardener. Into the calculation, however, must go the cost of seed and potting-compost, seed trays or modules, individual pots and a heated propagator. By contrast, you can buy 40 plugs of Petunia 'Prism Sunshine F1' from Dobies' for £8.65. (Postage is free for orders over £8.) There will be delivered in mid- to late April, so need only be potted up once and put in a frost-free place, before being "hardened off" and planted out in late May. My calculation is that, including the cost of compost and 3-in pots, you could have a garden-worthy petunia for about 50p.

Buying plantlets by mail order has its disadvantages. The range of choice available is still narrow and there are too many nasty colour mixtures of flowers for my taste, although this is improving.

Only Marshall's and D T Brown's offer vegetables other than greenhouse ones, such as tomatoes and cucumbers. Only the Organic Gardening catalogue carries wild flowers and herbs.

While the exact moment when seeds arrive is immaterial, it can be crucial in the case of young plants, which have to be dealt with almost immediately on arrival. So, if you are a kitchen-garden enthusiast who avoids flower colour mixtures like the plague and is away from home in the spring, this is not the solution for you. For everyone else, however, it has distinct possibilities.

Dobies (01801 616888), Suttons (01803 614614), The Organic Gardening Catalogue (01932 253666) and Marshall's (01945 583407), offer plugs in their catalogues. Unwin's (01945 588522), D T Brown's (0800 731 1231), Mr Fothergill's (01638 751887) and Thompson & Morgan (01787 884121) send out separate catalogues

WEEKEND WORK

ANNA PAVORD

ROUGH-DIG areas of the vegetable garden that you have cleared. Frost will then have a chance to get into the clods of earth and break them down. Spread compost or muck over the vegetable garden and start mulching round trees and shrubs with fresh collars of heavy organic matter.

PLANT CLOVES of garlic, choosing a sunny, well drained site with soil as light as you can make it. Break a head of garlic into separate cloves and push them into the ground in the same way as you would shallots. Set them about 6in apart. I always try to get hold of English-grown garlic to use as sets. Different strains are selected for different climates. Health food shops are a good source of supply. Cover the cloves with netting to stop birds tweaking them out. They will be ready to harvest by late July or early August.

TREE MALLOWS are not my thing, but if you have them, you should cut them down this month to about 2ft high. If they are still flowering, delay the cutting down until they have finished. They do not always survive the winter.

If you forgot to take cuttings in September and there are still shoots on the bush, try taking a few now. You need nodal cuttings, about 5in long, taken from shoots of semi-ripe wood. Make the cut through the slight bulge where the leaves join the stem and pull off the bottom leaves before potting the cuttings up, each one in a separate small pot. Keep them in a greenhouse or a frost-free garden frame.

YOU CAN also take hardwood cuttings now from a wide range of shrubs such as forsythia, kerria, philadelphus and weigela. For this you need cuttings about 9in long, taken from ripe wood. Choose growths that are pencil-thick. Remove soft growth at the top and any remaining leaves. Stick them upright in the ground so that the bottom two-thirds of the cutting is underground. Hardwood cuttings root more slowly than softwood ones and may not be ready to shift until next autumn.

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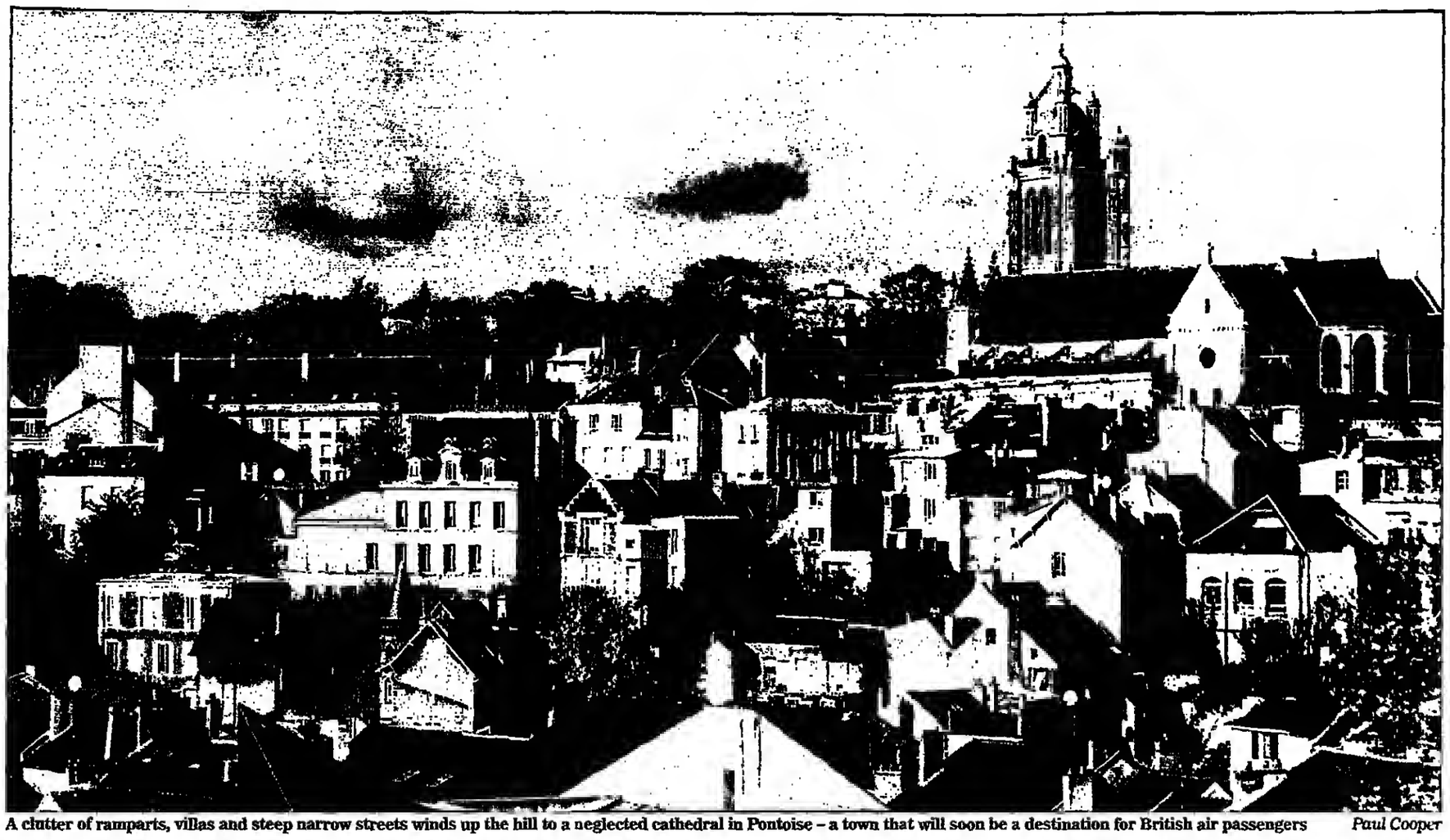
The tale of two ghost towns

Air travellers to Paris could find themselves landing in some unfamiliar places. By Natasha Edwards



A clutter of ramparts, villas and steep narrow streets winds up the hill to a neglected cathedral in Pontoise – a town that will soon be a destination for British air passengers *Paul Cooper*

The best airport in Paris is the oldest, Le Bourget, just a few miles from the centre. Next, both chronologically and geographically, comes Orly, nine miles from Notre Dame, the official heart of Paris. Charles de Gaulle is a poor third, born in 1976 and 14 miles out. But from this week, British travellers will be able to choose from two more: Cergy-Pontoise and Beauvais.

Until the Channel Tunnel came along, the busiest international air route in the world was London to Paris (it has since been overtaken by London to New York). On Monday, the route receives a boost with two flights a day, each way, on Debonair. You fly from Luton (32 miles from the English capital) to "Paris Express" airport, aka Cergy-Pontoise. The Official Airline Guide says it is "a mere 35 minutes from the city's heart".

Cergy-Pontoise is not your average tourist destination. Cergy-Pontoise, begun in 1965, is known for motorways and urban sprawl at the end of the RER line, but the old town of Pontoise was once the capital of the Vexin. That sounded promising and, thanks to the one-way system and complexity of the signposting, it is easy enough to find this historic remnant. We did – three times.

Sitting on a steep bank overlooking the river Oise, a potentially picturesque clutter of ramparts, villas and steep narrow streets winds up the hill to the neglected-looking cathedral of St Maclou, Pontoise's chief claim to a tourist sight. It is worth a look, with sculpted portal, Gothic interior and a few carved Romanesque capitals in the nave left from an earlier church. Most interesting, though, is the Baroque Deposition in a chapel to the left of the main door, with eight life-size marble figures in an alcove in the wall and, above it, a painted wooden Resurrection and a parade of nuns.

On a wet Saturday, however, you could take Pontoise for a ghost town. It did not bode well for lunch. Next to the cathedral, on the Place du Petit-Martory, the tourist office was closed. Back down at the bottom of the hill we hoped we could find somewhere to eat along the quais and crossed the river into St-Ouen-l'Aumône, another fragment of Oise village, where Queen Blanche of Castille founded the abbey of Maubisson in 1236.

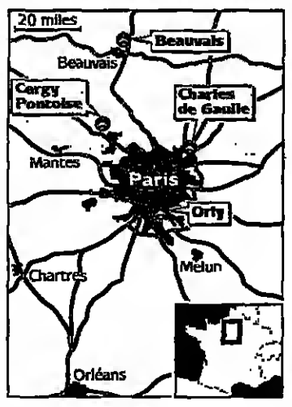
A friendly café at the end of the bridge yielded a satisfactory steak-frites and a ham and cheese salad and seemed to be where the few locals alive congregate of a Saturday. Pascale, holding forth at the bar, was talking of emigrating – to Brittany. Could we blame him?

We persevered in our sightseeing mission back to the top of Pontoise to the Musée Pissarro, the first floor of a suburban-looking red brick house on the site of the long-gone chateau constructed by Louis VI the Fat in the 11th century. There is a pretty little Signac and a Lucien Pissarro although only etchings by Camille Pissarro himself, who lived in Pontoise in the 1870s.

Apart from one elderly parishioner, we were the only visitors at Pontoise's second historic church, Notre Dame, with a much-altered interior, the Gothic tomb of local saint Gauthier, and a Renaissance porch. Tablets giving thanks to the Virgin reminded us that the miraculous statue in the chapel on the right of the entrance once drew pilgrims.

As a tourist destination Pontoise airport could find itself suffering a similar image problem to Luton; still, it's only 20 miles from Paris. "Glasgow gains its first non-stop link with Paris", promises Ryanair. Its new service begins on Thursday. Glasgow's principal airport is Prestwick, 32 miles from the city it purports to serve. Travellers arrive even further from a city centre; "Paris Tille" airport is outside Beauvais, 50 miles north of Paris.

Beauvais is in Picardy and there is already something of a feel of the north: low rise, lowlands and a jolly group of Barbour-clad hunters back from a day's shooting chatting at the bar where we stopped for coffee. We did not have much luck with the tourist office here, either, although a notice on the door assured us that the closure was exceptionelle.



Still, the main sight is impossible to miss. The historic town was virtually flattened by Second World War bombing in 1940 but what has to be the strangest cathedral in France is a miraculous survivor, sticking up at the heart of Beauvais and dominating the basin from afar. It has the tallest Gothic vault in the world and a spectacular crown of flying buttresses. The feat entailed numerous construction problems, as first the choir had to be rebuilt and then the spire collapsed. The nave was never built at all and the church suddenly stops in a wall at the transept, which only serves to accentuate the impression of verticality.

On one side of the choir is a curious astrological clock made by the local watchmaker, Lucien-Auguste Vérité, in 1865-68. It is a 19th-century extravagance of turned wood, gilt, dials and automata of extraordinary complexity (90,000 parts, 65 automatons and 52 dials); a ship sails past Jersey, and figures on the top enact a scene from the Last Judgement. Around the corner is a clock dating from the 14th century.

Next to the cathedral, a medieval gateway with bulbous fortified towers leads into the 16th-century bishop's palace, now the Musée Départemental de l'Oise, where we joined other international refugees from the rain to discover the city's illustrious heritage: carved wood details from destroyed half-timbered houses, stone sculptures, Nabis paintings, some fantastic Art Nouveau furniture and several of the tapestries for which the town was famous, including the History of the Gauls cycle originally woven for the cathedral.

The tapestry industry reached its peak in the 18th century and then stopped altogether when the factory was evacuated to Aubusson in 1939, but in the past couple of years there has been a revival. The Manufacture Nationale de la Tapisserie has opened in a converted abattoir and, during the week, you can watch weavers make tapestries here.

The Eglise St-Etienne is another survivor: more impressive flying buttresses, gargoyles, and a mixture of Gothic and Romanesque, although here what happened to the town is even more evident: the church stands on a traffic island.

For all that, though, it would be easy to come back to Beauvais for a lazy day or two.

Debonair (0541 500 300) will fly from Luton to "Paris Express" airport at Cergy-Pontoise from 16 November, and is promising a lowest flexible fare of £90 return. Ryanair (0541 569 569) is to start flights from Prestwick, near Glasgow, to Paris Beauvais on 19 November, minimum fare £70 return plus £8 for the bus to Paris

An eternity to reach the Eternal City

Martin Scudamore flies with Go and wonders why, if all roads lead to Rome, it is so difficult to get there from Ciampino airport

ROME AND back for £100. That had to be good. And the price has come down even more since we flew at the end of October. Everything about the flight was fine: the non-ticket system, the check-in, the plane, the leg room: all the usual standards seemed to apply. There was no "free" food, but we expected that, and the sandwiches, snacks and drinks were reasonably priced.

Ciampino airport, though – that was another matter.

As we approached Rome's second airport, we were offered return coach tickets to Termini (the rail hub of the city) for the equivalent of £7 each. We would then require a metro ticket to continue to our hotel. According to the information in the in-flight magazine, a combined bus/metro or a bus/train ticket for the entire journey would cost 2,700 lire, just £1. So we declined the Go offer and headed for the baggage reclaim, where, we were informed, we could buy the tickets. "No, not in here; there's a machine outside," informed the security man.

The bus stop had on it, helpfully, "Bus to Roma". But the machine was impossible to understand, even in English mode, and the cheapest ticket was 6,000 lire. So, on we went to the departures hall, where the news-stand was supposed to sell tickets. Yes, but they cost 2,000 lire, and were for the bus only.

We gathered from the timetable that we had just missed the 12.20 bus and the next was at 1.20pm. As that time approached, we realised that some other people at the stop had bought the Go coach tickets. So what had happened to their coach? Well, they had never been told clearly where to find it: a German man familiar with the airport said that he had seen it lurking behind some buses in another bay, but now it had gone. The passengers had no option but to catch the bus with us, and to pay again.

After a few miles the bus stopped at a station. No visible markings anywhere. We disembarked and headed towards the tracks, only to discover that this was the train station, not the metro we wanted. The bus had departed, along with the helpful German, and we were left to guess which platform we needed. It was pure luck that the next train that came along took us into Termini, and that we were not asked to show any other tickets.

Now we faced only a hot, unpleasant walk underground to the metro, and the opportunity to be robbed at the second stop.

Rome, the Eternal City? Seemed more like eternal damnation on our arrival. So is it worth trying to save every last penny on fares?

A taxi would have prevented our being mugged, but would have cost, as reported by Go, between £18 and £27, according to the amount of luggage. In any case there was a cab strike all the time we were in Rome. When available, a taxi might be the better bet, as you have saved so much on your plane fare, although it does seem ridiculous to pay £50 to get from Stansted to the edge of Rome and than half that again to reach the centre.

Returning to Ciampino airport at the end of your stay can be equally scary. Out on the metro to Anagnina station at the end of Line A, buy a bus ticket from the ticket office, and the airport sign directs you up a short flight of steps to a vast concourse dotted with buses and noticeboards, with views over Rome's hideous outer suburbs with their sprawling blocks of flats.

The airport bus is waiting, but has no driver – and, more worryingly, no one else there has any luggage. When we were there we thought we must be mistaken. Even when the driver arrived and we set off, we were not confident. At each junction we expected him to take the wrong turning and to head, inexorably, for Naples, or back to Rome.

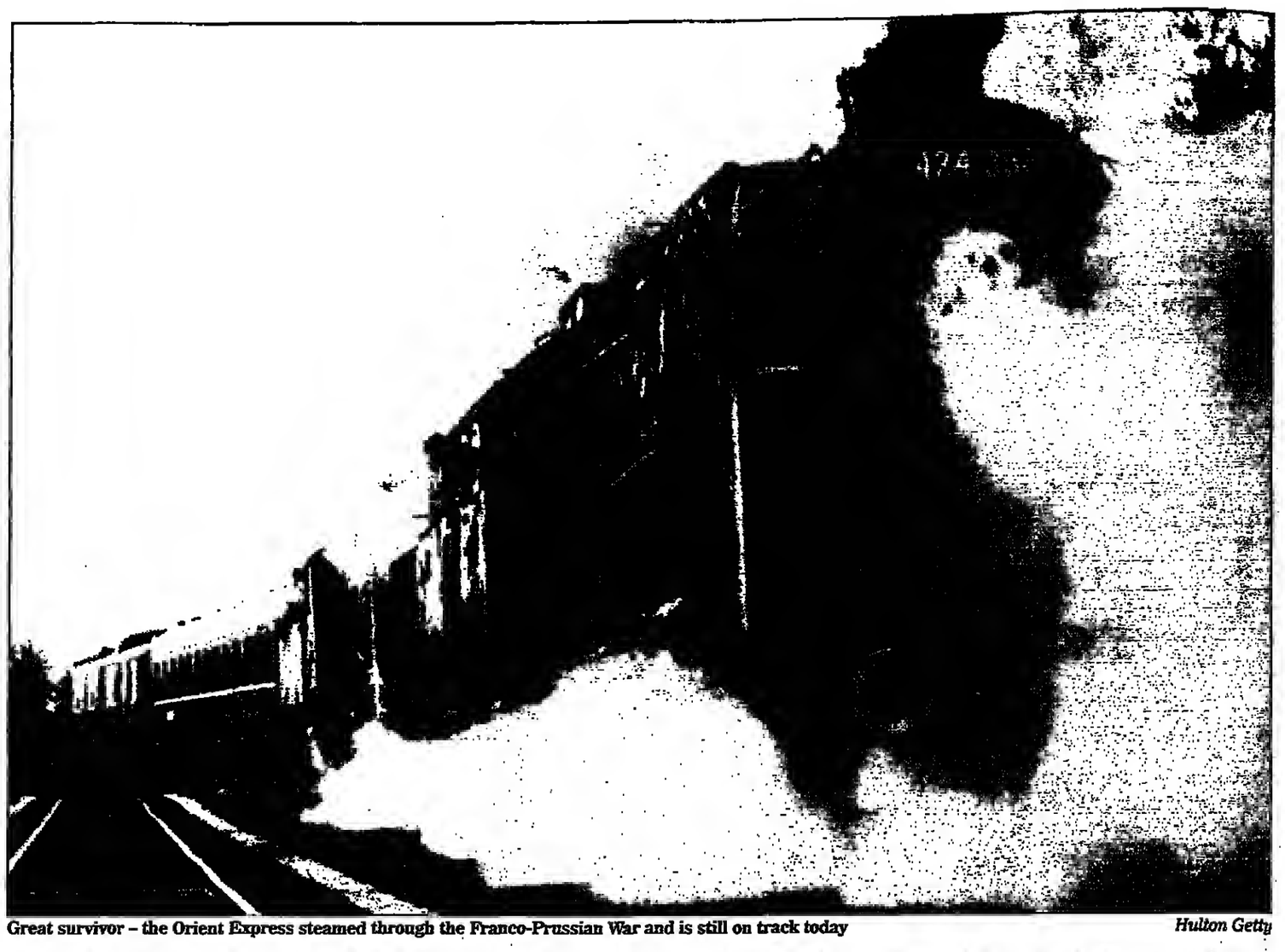
When we finally reached familiar ground at Ciampino station, the driver got out and switched off the engine. "Aeroport?" we moaned. "Dotto", he appeared to say, and departed to smoke a cigarette with his friend the inspector.

On returning to the bus he took an unlikely detour (the road was in many places so choked with apparently randomly parked cars that the bus could hardly pass) to drop off the inspector right at his house.

If we had been up against a tight time deadline we would have been frantic by now. This does not seem to be a feasible link in a well-ordered international travel itinerary.

Climb aboard the real Euro star

A sprint to Paris or Brussels pales in comparison. Take a proper train journey to Budapest on the original Orient Express. By **Andrew Osborn**



Great survivor – the Orient Express steamed through the Franco-Prussian War and is still on track today *Hulton Getty*

The First World War ended in a *wagon-lit*: car number 2419, in which Marshal Foch, the French commander-in-chief, received the German surrender near Compiègne on 11 November 1918. It was an appropriate setting for the final act of the war, since in peacetime in the first half of the 20th century the company's trains were the definitive way to travel.

Even though the surviving Orient Express today ends at Budapest (and is nothing to do with the recent upstart luxury Venice-Simplon Orient Express), train 263 from Gare de l'Est in Paris carries a cargo of history on its journey east. At its sumptuous peak, elegant navy-blue-and-gold carriages carrying the brass crest of the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits et des Grands Express Européens concealed interiors and fittings straight from a Victorian manor-house.

Waiters clad as butlers served first-rate food and wine to a clientele who expected nothing less. Crystal chandeliers illuminated luxury dining-cars in which the cutlery was silver, the napkins were linen and the upholstery was leather. The artistry and detail of the wooden marquetry were exquisite; the solid brass table lamps and the luggage-racks were objects of beauty. Sleeping compartments were convertible, with the table being folded away and the four armchairs pushed together to form two beds at night.

Perhaps Georges Nagelmackers, the Belgian who founded Wagons-Lits in 1876, was never destined to become a household name. This honour was reserved for the man who inspired him, the American George Mortimer Pullman.

Pullman's genius had been to introduce communal sleeping-cars to the US in the 1860s, providing a measure of comfort hitherto unknown on the railways. Pullman's agreement with different American railway lines to ensure that passengers were not obliged to change trains so often was equally groundbreaking. On a trip to America in 1869 the young Belgian engineer was so inspired by Pullman's achievements that within a year he had established his first route from Ostend to Brindisi, in spite of the complications caused by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War.

By 1874 Nagelmackers, with a little help from his friends, had thwarted Pullman's European ambitions and established a far-reaching network that was to ensure the success of the fabled Orient Express well into the next century. In February 1883 Nagelmackers met representatives from eight different railway companies in Constantinople. (It became Istanbul in 1923, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.) From this conference the Express d'Orient was born, its name being anglicised in 1891 in recognition of its international status.

On 4 October 1883, a distinguished party set off from the Gare de l'Est, Paris, and trundled in a sea of champagne through France, Germany and Austria. Initially the Orient Express was not a through train, for the Danube had to be crossed by ferry at Giurgiu in Romania into Bulgaria. A rather less salubrious train awaited, rattling its way to Varna on the Black Sea, where the shaken passengers joined the good steamer *Espero* for an 18-hour voyage to Constantinople.

In August 1888 the first through train from Paris arrived in Constantinople 67 hours and 35 minutes later. It was a dramatic reduction of 14 hours in the journey time.

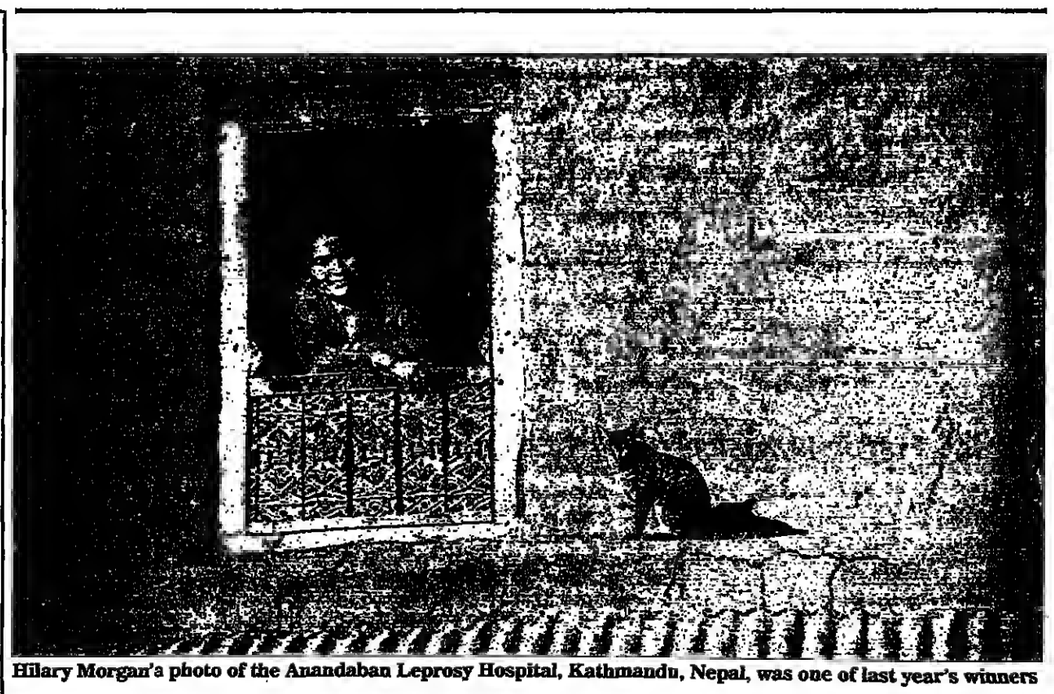
Towards the end of the 19th century, Wagons-Lits acquired luxury hotels to look after wealthy passengers in the style to which they were accustomed. The grandiose Bosporos Summer Palace Hotel in Constantinople, overlooking the Straits of Asia, was one of the company's more exotic undertakings. Among the royal passengers were the kings of Bulgaria and Hungary, who used the train to travel to Queen Victoria's funeral in 1901. King Boris of Bulgaria was such a fan that he often exercised his royal right to drive the Orient Express as it passed through his country.

The train ground to a halt when the First World War broke out in 1914. The original route did not resume until 1931, in part because of German unwillingness to co-operate. After the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, however, the Simplon-Orient Express, named after the Simplon Tunnel between Switzerland and Italy, began in April 1919. Deliberately routed to avoid the politically unreliable Germany, Austria and Hungary, it went instead via Switzerland and Italy and in this inter-war period became as legendary as the original Orient Express itself.

Once again the outbreak of war in 1939 brought about the suspension of the service; the train, at least, was never to be the same again. With the fall of France in 1940, much Wagons-Lits rolling stock was sequestered by the Germans. Stationary sleeping-cars became camouflaged makeshift barracks (or even brothels) whilst dining-cars were often converted into restaurants.

By the end of the war, Wagons-Lits had lost a staggering 845 carriages, including perhaps their most famous diner, car number 2419, where Germany had surrendered at the conclusion of the First World War. Hitler, always a lover of drama and symbolism, had the self-same dining-car dragged from its museum in 1940 to the very same place at Compiègne to receive the French surrender. The carriage was then hauled off to Berlin until 1945 when, facing all-out defeat, it was blown sky high by an SS unit determined to avoid a humiliating replay of 1918. Following the Allied victory, the Iron Curtain began to descend over eastern Europe and after 1947 Wagons-Lits' contracts there were not renewed. In any case air travel was in the ascendancy, far cheaper and quicker than the Orient Express.

The original Orient Express can be booked through Rail Europe (0990 848 848) as part of a normal trip to Budapest. A return from London costs £358 and takes 24 hours each way. The last trip of the year on the luxury Venice-Simplon Orient Express (0171-805 5100), from London Victoria to Venice (via the Folkestone-Boulogne SeaCat), departs tomorrow. The service resumes in March; the one-way fare (based on two sharing) is £1,130



Hilary Morgan's photo of the Anandaban Leprosy Hospital, Kathmandu, Nepal, was one of last year's winners

Win a photo commission

... and a Canon EOS5 SLR. 'The Independent', in association with 'Wanderlust' magazine, wants your best travel pictures

CATCH THAT elusive photographic moment, and our third competition could be lucky for you. Each Saturday, these travel pages carry thousands of words designed to inform and inspire the traveller. We also use a few good images, and believe in giving amateur photographers the chance to dazzle.

For each of the past two years, *The Independent* has teamed up with the travel magazine *Wanderlust* to offer prizes of valuable camera equipment and something that money can't buy: a photographic commission from *The Independent*. Last year, the quality of the entries was outstanding; this year, the prizes are better than ever. We have brought in one of the best names in photography: Canon.

If you have captured a strong image from somewhere in the world, it could qualify for one of the three competition categories: Urban Life, Rural Life and Wild Life.

The top 30 shortlisted entries will be displayed at Destinations '99, the travel exhibition to be held at London Olympia from 18-21 February next year.

Canon will present the overall winner with an EOS5 SLR with 28-135IS lens – retailing at a total of £1,200 – while Bellingham will provide a photo rucksack and Ventile photo-vest (total value £280). *The Independent* will offer the winner a UK-based photo commission.

The two winners of the other categories will each receive an EOS IX with 24-85mm lens (worth £600) plus a Billingham Photo Original Hadley bag (RRP £87.50). Each of the three runners-up will win a Canon Sure Shot 60 Zoom Kit worth £90, and a Billingham Small Hadley camera bag (RRP £75).

You can enter at any time before the end of this year, but take the first step now by sending in a sae for an application form, which includes the competition rules.

The address is Wanderlust (Photo of the Year), PO Box 1832, Windsor SL4 6YP. Alternatively, you can complete the form in the fifth anniversary edition of the magazine, which will go on sale on 27 November, price £2.80.

Messing about with books

Historical Rochester, beloved of bibliophiles, has two claims to fame: the Medway and Charles Dickens. By Guy de la Bedoyere

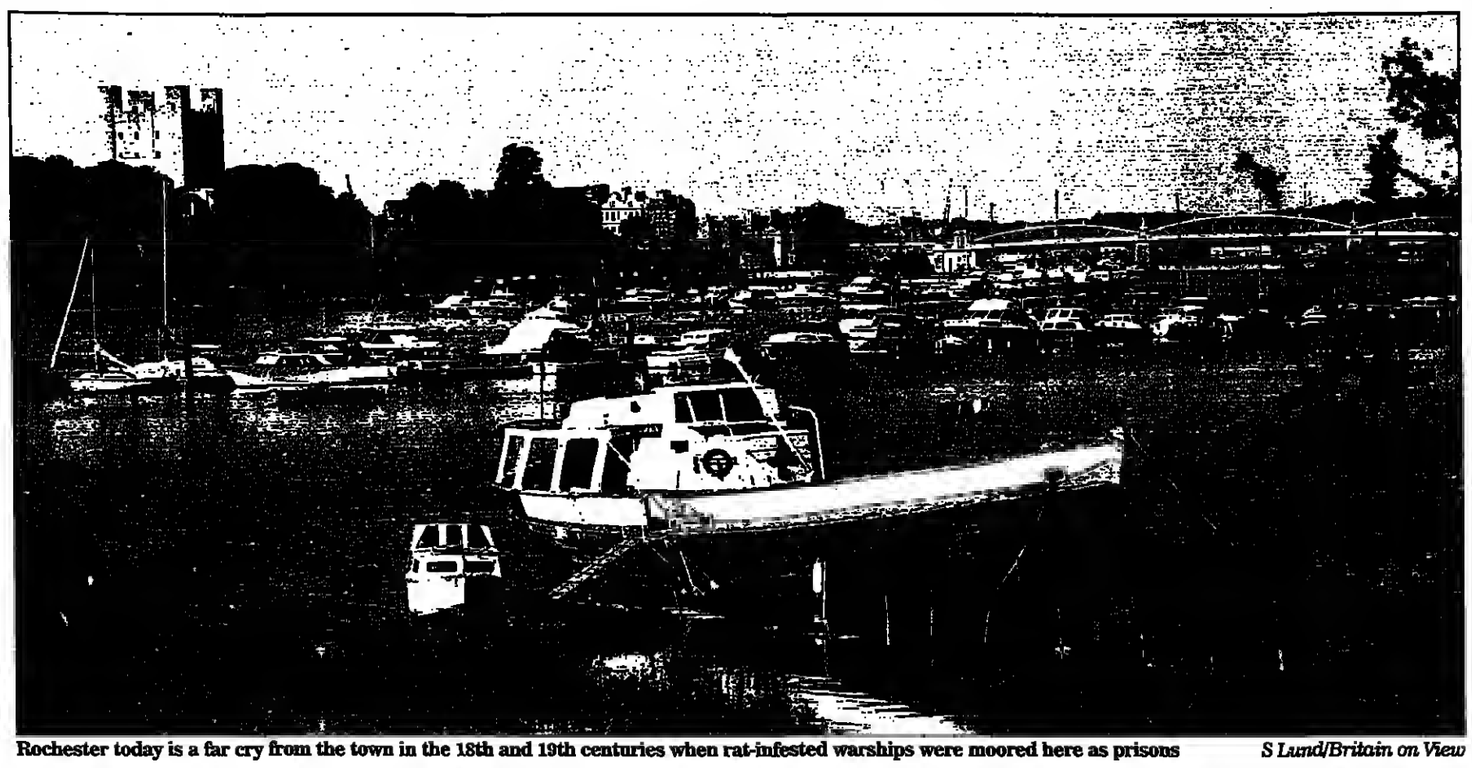
If your idea of paradise is a an endless parade of second-hand booksbops, junksbops and museums, all within easy walking distance, then Rochester is the place for you. And unlike most of Britain's other large towns with a past, it isn't swarming with shoppers and winter tourists.

Rochester is a genuinely interesting place which retains much of its ancient feel. However, I must confess to a mild personal interest bere. My great-great-grandfather was Bishop of Rochester between 1877 and 1890. As children, we were wheeled off in the late-Sixties to view his cathedral.

Once a walled, Roman city, old Rocbester has barely expanded beyond its medieval boundaries – though it has merged seamlessly with Gillingham and Chatham. The centrepiece is the old High Street, now pedestrianised apart from access for deliveries. It's a tumbling cascade of eclectic emporia, many of which milk the Dickens connection for all it's worth (he used to live nearby and many of his greatest stories use images from the area).

The best place to begin a wander round town is at the free museum attached to the glorious 17th-century Guildhall, built in 1687. In bere, you'll find pieces that reflect pretty much all of Rochester's history, including room interiors and the council chamber. The most interesting bit is the skillfully recreated prison bulk, using a small portion of deck and an array of mirrors. It's a reminder that this wbole area was once a naval centre.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, rat-infested, rotting and reeking wrecks, once great men-o'-war, were moored bere to bouse prisoners from wars and from London's crime-ridden streets. Some of the inmates produced the most extraordinary models and artefacts made from bone while they waited for transportation to the colonies. The sbeer horror and brutality is difficult to imagine. It's all a far cry from the Rochester of today, which is positively fun-filled in comparison.



Rochester today is a far cry from the town in the 18th and 19th centuries when rat-infested warships were moored here as prisons *S Lund/Britain on View*

Just past the Guildhall is the fabulous Baggin's Book Bazaar, which claims to be the largest second-hand bookshop in Britain (not an unusual claim, it has to be said, but this is big enough to be close to the truth). The modest shop front belies its meandering corridors of low ceilings, strip lights and shabby shelves. The stock is pbenomenal but, like a lot of Rochester's shops, slightly too pricey to allow unlimited impulse buys. Content is mostly local history with travel and literature upstairs at the back, and history, geograpby, science, biography and novels downstairs.

There are plenty more bookshops, though none of them are anything like as big. Some of the other shops offer a strange mix of potpourri, dolls, cards, stripped-pine furniture and a liberal scattering of slightly chipped Victorian meat plates. In between them are ordinary greengrocers and clothes shops. I prefer those which veer wildly between junk and antiques and where a 17th-century walnut armchair sits alongside a Forties Bakelite telephone and a pile of yellowing, Ian Fleming paperbacks.

One shop of bygones is a vast chamber with a bizarre window display of gas masks, chairs, battered dolls, brass fittings and clay pipes. Inside, rows of Edwardian tables and Victorian wardrobes are stacked with china, boxes, suitcases, glass and a selection of fragments from a Dornier bomber which crasbed nearby in the Second World War.

But Rochester wasn't founded to house antique and ephemera shops. It's bere because of the Medway, a buge tributary of the Thames, and once bome to Charles II's fleet. In 1667, the Dutch came up the Medway, burned the fleet and made off with the flagship, the *Royal Charles*.

At Rochester, the Romans founded a town called Durobrivae (a name which means "bridge-fort"). For centuries, the High Street was Watling Street, a great Roman highway from Richborough in Kent to London. In medieval times, it was the main road between London and Canterbury. The route was busy with a throng of travellers and one Richard Watts Esquire saw to it that the poorer among them could get lodgings. Look out for his bouse and its plaque which records that under his will, dated 22 August 1579, six travellers who could pay fourpence would be entitled to a a night's "lodging entertainment".

Long before, the Normans knew that Rochester's river crossing was very important so they built a colossal castle keep there, right over part of the Roman city wall. It is now open to the public, a huge pile of ragstone and cement with a vast internal void where wooden floors have rotted away. Climb to the top and from there you can look down on the diminutive Norman cathedral.

King John once laid siege bere and, in an especially repulsive turn of events, used pig carcasses to speed things up. He had a bole dug under one of the corner towers and stuffed it with dead pigs. These were then set on fire and the resultant implosion caused the corner of the castle to subside. Today, you can still see that one of the towers, later rebuilt, is quite different from the other ones.

Another king came here, too, but unlike John he was sad and incompetent. In 1688, William and Mary were invited to England to take the throne from the Catholic James II. He fled and spent his last night bere before he left England for ever on 23 December 1688. The bouse where he slept, appropriately called Abdication House, is now where the Lloyds Bank is located on the High Street.

There are plenty of more interesting buildings. Sir Cloudsley Shovell (1650-1707) was a city worthy (MP between 1698 and 1707). He rose to be admiral and commander-in-chief of the fleet in 1705, early in the reign of Queen Anne. Unfortunately, shortcomings in navigation skills of the age, which confounded an accurate calculation of longitude, contributed to his being shipwrecked on the Scilly Isles just after he had defeated the French fleet. The legend bas it that a local woman found him washed up on shore and killed him for his ring. There's a marvellous façade in the High Street, replete with teetering clock and plaque erected at Sir Cloudsley's "sole charge and expense" in 1706.

But, if any one person bas really captured the imagination of the good burghers of Rochester, it's Charles Dickens. This is unequivocally his town and that of his creations: Magwitch, Copperfield, and scores of other names that seem ludicrous if you think about them for long enough. He lived nearby at Gads Hill Place, a house later owned by the rather different creative figures of Rod Hull and Emu.

Every one of the Rochester bookshops has a Dickens section. The Dickens Centre itself is in a vast 16th-century brick and balf-timbered pile called Eastgate House, at the east end of the High Street. It features various talking beads and vignettes from the books in a tour of the great man's works. Not only that, but the bouse itself was featured by Dickens in *Pickwick Papers* as Westgate House and in the garden is a chalet that was used by the great man while be wrote *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* just before he died. With its dinky old shops and cobbled streets, perhaps even David Copperfield would still recognise Rochester.

The Dickens Centre is open daily from 10am, last admission 4.45pm: adults £3.50, children £2.50, family (two adults, two children, £9.50). Rochester Castle (English Heritage) is open daily, 10am-4pm (last admission, 3.30pm); adults £3.50, children £2.50. The Guildhall museum is open daily, 10am-5.30pm (last admission, 5pm); free

SIMON CALDER

How will Slobodan Cerovic promote his cause as Minister of Tourism for Serbia?

MUCH IN the travel industry is faintly ridiculous, which makes it such fun to work in. The coming week will see madness erupt in Earls Court, in west London, wben the annual World Travel Market takes place.

Among the imponderables at this year's frenzy of multinational networking: how the Gulf island state of Qatar, a new exhibitor, proposes to sell itself to the travelling public ("It's really not all that bad" is as enthusiastic as *Lonely Planet* gets). It will also be interesting to learn bow the Chilean tourist board will counter the current Foreign Office advice that travellers sbould avoid the country "unless on esseotial business". But most importantly, I want to bear what Slobodan Cerovic will be saying to promote his cause as Minister of Tourism for Serbia.

Many of us have happy memories of visiting the republic before the collapse of Yugoslavia. Mr Cerovic is leading a delegation of senior tourism figures seeking to reawaken our interest in Serbia – "despite the problems affecting UK tourism this year due to the crisis in Kosovo", according to the press release put out by the PR company that has beeo hired for the event.

I look forward to asking Mr Cerovic and his colleagues if it is appropriate to promote tourism in a country which, even by the normally unchallenging standards of international diplomacy, is a pariah because of its actions against its neigbbours and minorities.

THE OTHER big travel event on Monday is the flattening of the lumpy travel-ageocy playing field. For years, many travel agents' windows have been filled with posters offering discounts of 10 per cent or more on bolidays. From next week, all that could change. The Government has ordered travel agents to end the practice of tying discounts to the purchase of overpriced insurance.

The Department of Trade and Industry promised cbeaper bolidays as a result of this new rule. For the average package, that is unlikely to bappen; most customers will end up paying the same for the boliday-plus-insurance package. The big travel agents are planning to give insurance away with bolidays, instead of offering a big discount.

The benefit for consumers is that they will be able to compare prices without having to take convoluted insurance calculations into consideration.

Those who are likely to be worse off are the same group who found the "discount only with insurance" position so irritating: holders of annual policies. Before, they had to get double insurance cover in order to get a discount; now, they will likely be offered free insurance even if they don't want it. There is pleoty of room for an agent wbo is prepared to offer a straight discount with no strings attached and no unwanted add-ons.

WE MAY also get to benefit from less comprehensive travel insurance policies. Less cover, not more, can be a blessing for travellers who are not inclined to make fraudulent claims. Some industry estimates suggest that six of every 10 claims for lost or stolen possessions are bogus (I was appalled to meet a traveller on the road who proudly told me that his rucksack bad "been 'stolen' three times so far").

In the absence of a box on policy application forms saying "Do you intend to make any fraudulent claims? Tick yes or no", all we can do is opt out of that part of the insurance policy altogether; there is a cogent argument that the real value of travel insurance resides solely with emergency medical treatment and repatriation costs. So which brave broker or travel agent will sell me (or give away) such a no-frills policy?

NEXT TIME you fly from Heathrow Terminal Four, look for a sign opposite check-in desk 54. "British Airways Recovery Unit" it says, beside a kind of sentry box. Is it for passengers who have drunk too much or is it something to do with the next economic downturn?

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هكذا من الاصل

Passage to India (no backpack required)

How about sleeping in a hotel with an early-morning elephant option, or lying on a Bounty Bar beach? **John Laurenson** has an ideal route

Reclining semi-nude on some airport seating, a sort of Harrison Ford with body-piercing, Ronnie, 27, recounted his India experience. From the glass of tap water drunk "to see how his body would take it", to the night with an amputee, Ronnie's route to the subcontinent is the back passage to India. It is very popular with the young. But there is another way, gentler on the senses and hardly more expensive, which will send you back to your loved ones tanned, refreshed and full of tales of a beautiful country.

The key to this milder India is knowing where to go, in what order, and for how long. Here, then, is an itinerary for three weeks in south India – during our winter – at a cost of about £750 (say £400 for the flight and £350 for everything else).

Fly to Trivandrum. Take a taxi or auto-rickshaw to Varkala, a little over an hour's drive away (300-550Rs, depending on your bargaining technique). Varkala, you will be pleased to find, is one of the most beautiful places on Earth. The beach is a Bounty Bar advert – a paradise of sand, coconut trees and birds that whoop in the night.

Back from the sea, you can sit drinking lassi by the temple tank, a large and stately holy pond. At night, at one of the cliff-top shack cafés, eat a fine crab with a pot of "special tea" (the nudge is as good-as-a-wink name for beer in the dry state of Kerala). Way out on the Arabian Sea, the lamps on the fishing skiffs flicker on the horizon like the lights of another shore.

The best place to stay in Varkala is the Government Guest House, a former Maharaja's residence, now a resting point for Indian bureaucrats on-the-move. There are usually a few beds left over for tourists and with a hit of luck you'll end up with a room the size of a squash court for a pound a night.

Varkalan drawback: oglers. It is a sad fact that large numbers of Indian men are prepared to travel long distances in order to see a woman in a bathing costume.

After a week or so, it's time to move. Get the morning train to Kollam (formerly Quilon). Go second class, deftly avoiding being frozen alive by the first-class air conditioning. Instead, stand, TE Lawrence-like, at the open door of the moving train as you chug through the lush and lovely Keralan backwaters.

At Kollam, take the next train to the temple town of Madurai. First class. (Here, the extra money will buy you space and a bouncy seat for this seven-hour journey and there's no horsing around with air-conditioning, just a lot of fans.)

The train ambles up into the hills, brushing past banana and pineapple trees like a nonchalant cow. It takes you through great green valleys, then down on to the roasting plains of Tamil Nadu where cotton and chilli-peppers grow and goatherds carry umbrellas to keep off the sun.

It is strange to smell fresh dung in the heart of a big city. Not in Madurai. A thousand sacred cows with horns painted red and green wander about as if they own the place.

The temple is one of the most impressive in India, an ancient labyrinth of shady arcades where gods are carried in litters, draped in jasmine petals or spattered with butter. If you see an elephant in the temple, give him a rupee and he'll touch your head with the tip of his trunk.

The Aarathy is a good place to stay. It is clean, reasonably priced and has an early-morning elephant option. An elephant comes to the hotel at dawn each morning and eats 14 rice cakes. Ask at the desk and someone will shout "elephant" at your door at 6.30am.

After a night or two, you'll probably be fed-up of Madurai – this is an Indian town that seethes. It's time to go shopping and get out. Buy Madras check shirts, precious jewels, tea-towels, semi-precious jewels, excellent women's beach bags in woven plastic, saffron, and a small pot of Tiger Balm, then take a bus to Kodaikanal.

If you book at the Tourist Information desk at the railway station, a Kodaikanal-bound mini-bus will drive round to your hotel and pick you up. The trip lasts a bit over three hours and costs around £2 in the mini-bus, or next-to-nothing on what is likely to be a very crowded, regular bus.

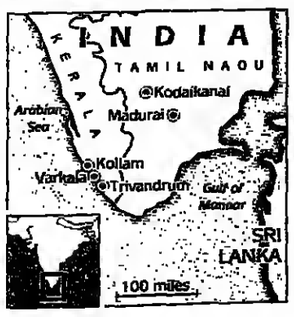
Kodaikanal is a former hill station, 2,000 metres up. The British would withdraw here in the summer months to escape the heat and malaria of the plains, and do a bit of gardening.

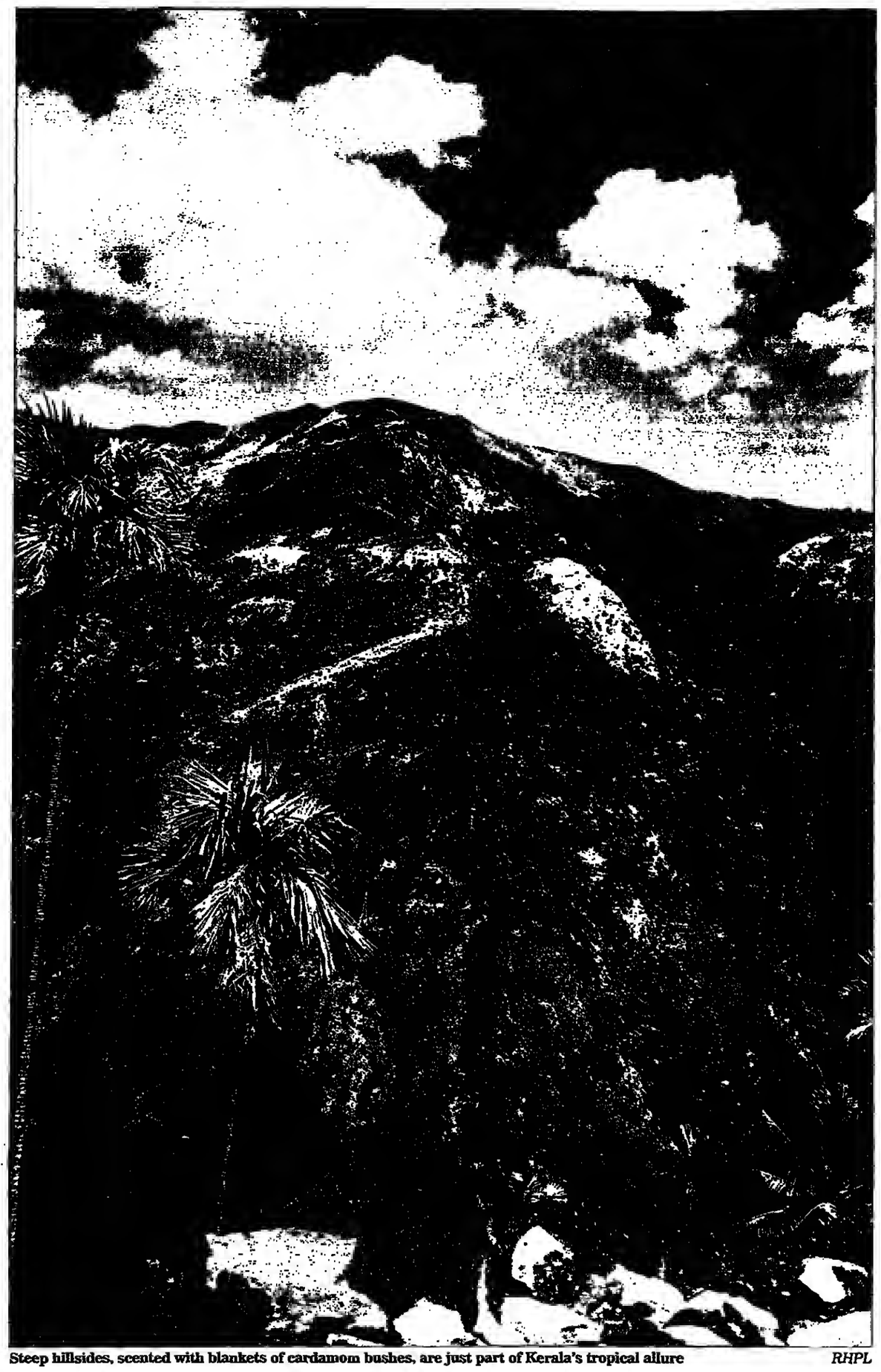
A serious bid was made by Kodaikanal's former occupiers to make it as much like Surrey as circumstances allowed. There are, then, hedgerows, grey-stone cottages, a parish church and a Tudor-style hotel and bar.

Here, the place to stay is a little nest of cottages called Taj villas (£6 a night for a handsome double-room with fireplace). It gets nippy at night until April so you'll need long trousers and a jumper. In the mornings, on the lawn looking down over the valleys, you can breakfast on banana porridge, peanut-buttered toast and masala tea, then strike out on foot. This is fine walking country, full of plunging valleys, exotic birds and bison, waterfalls, monkeys and mimosa. If you're intrepid, you might even come across one of the ancient, isolated hill villages, hours away on foot (or donkey) from the nearest road.

There are five days left. You're feeling fit, almost invincibly fit. You're already starting to wonder if you really need to keep using Evian to brush your teeth. Tame that tiger! And make your way back quietly the way you came.

Getting there: the cheapest flights to India are generally on airlines from the former Soviet Union. You can expect to pay around £300 return to Delhi on an airline such as Armenian Airlines via Yerevan, booked through Classic Travels (0171-499 2222). Aeroflot comes in at about £350. For more familiar airlines, you can expect to pay rather more. To reach Kerala, the best plan is to find a cheap charter flight to Trivandrum, e.g. through advertisements on ITV's Teletext





Steep hillsides, scented with blankets of cardamom bushes, are just part of Kerala's tropical allure *RHPL*

SOMETHING TO DECLARE

NEWS FROM THE TRAVEL WORLD

Bargain of the week
Philadelphia return for £169. Belfast or Birmingham to Barry White's home-town for less than two pence a mile. Or, indeed, Newcastle or Norwich to New York for the same figure. If you can book by tonight, you could secure one of the best transatlantic air fares ever, travelling from one of 17 airports in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to one of two great cities. Minimum stay: one Saturday night; maximum: one month.

The airline behind the deal is KLM. Between 15 January and 15 March next year, you can fly to either city from. (Deep breath) Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, Humberside, Leeds, Bradford, London (City, Gatwick, Heathrow or Stansted), Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Sheffield, Southampton and Teeside. You have to change planes at Amsterdam.

To give you some idea of how good a deal this is, the normal Belfast-to-Amsterdam fare alone is £236. Tickets to New York are available at around £170, but to Philadelphia, fares on direct flights are running at around £270 through discount agents.

Travellers from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow can also take advantage of the offer, but, strangely, Scots have to pay £20 more.

For travellers based in the south-east, by booking through a discount agent and flying from Gatwick on KLM's partner, Northwest, you can save an extra fiver (this being the tax normally payable at Amsterdam).

You must book by 9pm tonight through a travel agent, direct with the airline on 0990 074 074 (though this line has been overloaded this week), or on the Web at www.klmuk.com before midnight tonight.

Trouble spots
Around 150 nations will be trying to sell themselves to the travel trade at the World Travel Market, which begins in London on Monday. Here is the latest Foreign Office advice about some of them:

Israel: British nationals will be aware of the recent rise in tensions in the region. We advise against all non-essential travel to Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Chile: We advise against all non-essential travel to Chile. Although street violence has abated over the past week, feeling against Britain and British nationals is likely to remain high, and could increase, for as long as Senator Pinochet is in Britain. The situation is volatile and could change very swiftly. In such circumstances, British nationals and British commercial interests could become targets for spontaneous attacks.

NEW FILMS

BLADE (18)
Director: Stephen Norrington
Starring: Wesley Snipes, Stephen Dorff
Monotonous arcade-game thriller about a New York vampire-killer tackling a crazed bloodsucker.
Countrywide

DESTINY (AL MASSIR – LE DESTIN) (NC)
Director: Youssef Chahine
Starring: Nour El Cherif
Chahine's flamboyant period fancy of a liberal sage and his battles with the rigid social order at large in medieval Spain.
Limited release

FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)
Director: Terry Gilliam
Starring: Johnny Depp, Benicio Del Toro
See Independent Recommends, right

FIRE (15)
Director: Deepa Mehta
Starring: Shabana Azmi, Jaaved Jaaferi,
Mehta's Indian-Canadian co-production mounts a vibrant attack on the Indian family set-up.
Limited release

HENRY FOOL (18)
Director: Hal Hartley
Starring: James Urbaniak, Parker Posey
Nominally about a lowly garbage man (James Urbaniak) who writes a masterpiece, *Henry Fool* is chiefly about art, integrity and inspiration, steering its own oddball course throughout.
On general release

HOPE FLOATS (PG)
Director: Forest Whitaker
Starring: Sandra Bullock, Harry Conick Jnr
A winsome piece that turns a loving eye on Sandra Bullock as a down-in-the-dumps ex-beauty queen.
Countrywide

THE ODD COUPLE II (15)
Director: Howard Deutch
Starring: Walter Matthau, Jack Lemmon
The follow-up to Neil Simon's Sixties flat-share favourite dispatches its mismatched couple off to a wedding and then strands them in the desert. The two stars work hard to keep it upright.
Countrywide

Xan Brooks

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

Film Xan Brooks

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (*left*), makes for a bumpy trip overall. The plot (about a zany journalistic assignment to Nevada) is just a convenient peg on which to drape a lot of narcotic malarkey, and, having done that, Terry Gilliam's Hunter Thompson adaptation finally finds itself with no particular place to go. What holds the interest is Johnny Depp's strikingly weird central performance, plus a certain speedy buzz to the direction.
On general release.

TRY AND catch The Idiots while you can, since this censor-baiting bit of guerrilla film-making may yet have problems negotiating the BBFC. The subject of a hot pro-and-con debate at Cannes, Lar Von Trier's tale of faux "idiots" running amok in everyday society detonates like a controlled laboratory explosion.
NFT, London SE1 (0171-928 3232) tonight 8.45pm

Theatre Dominic Cavendish

THERE'S PLENTY of good watching matter at the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow tonight: the priority booking must be the closing performance of Philip Prowse's acclaimed revival of Pinter's The Homecoming. Andrea Hart stars as Ruth, the trophy wife who becomes both object of and main-player in her husband's all-male family home. Running concurrently, to Nov 21, are two other girl-power classics: a new version by Clare Venables of Seneca's Medea, which throws the jilted wife's final act of vengeance into shocking relief, and David Mamet's explosive study of sexual politics, Oleanna, directed by Robert David MacDonald.
Citizens Theatres, Glasgow (0141-429 0022) 7.30pm

LAST CALL for Northern Broadsides' foam phallus-waving, clog-stomping production of The Trackers of Oxyrhynchus. This thought-provoking comedy by Tony Harrison (*right*) fills in the gaps of a fragmented Sophoclean satyr play while testing the cultural assumptions of the two Oxford papyrologists who discovered it.
West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds (0113 213 7700) 7.30pm

GENERAL RELEASE

AIR BUD (U)
A ludicrous yet entertaining tale about a young boy who befriends a basketball-playing dog. What will snare audiences is the catalogue of tricks, beautifully performed by the canine Buddy, while the film is enjoyable for both adults and children.

ANTZ (PG)
This computer-animated trifle is surely the most unlikely Woody Allen movie we will ever see. He allegedly re-wrote the bulk of his dialogue to provide the voice of worker-ant "Z" who falls in with the regal Princess Bala (Sharon Stone).

DR DOLITTLE (PG)
This snappy new film version of *Dr Dolittle* shows Eddie Murphy's talents to be far more pliable than they might have first appeared.

ELIZABETH (15)
Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a female figurehead struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But Kapur largely neglects the opportunities for fun in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty.

EVER AFTER (PG)
Drew Barrymore stars as a 16th-century daddy's girl who is tormented by her stepmother (Anjelica Huston) after her father's death but finds hope in the arms of a handsome prince.

THE EXORCIST (25TH ANNIVERSARY RERELEASE) (18)
The Exorcist is a creature conditioned by rumour and hearsay, its legend swelling in the 25 years since its release. But Friedkin's seminal horror is still efficiently terrifying. The chill atmosphere clings to the skin throughout.

FUNNY GAMES (18)
This attack on screen violence discreetly cuts away during its more shocking moments, yet is big on gruesome sound effects. Its cast-iron claustrophobia leaves you fighting for breath.

HALLOWEEN: H20 (18)
Twenty years after the events of the original *Halloween*, our resident psychopath returns to terrorise his sister (Jamie Lee Curtis). Standard shocks with a glazing of post-modern in-jokes.

MY NAME IS JOE (15)
Ken Loach's solid social-realist drama tells the tale of Joe (Peter Mullan), a recovering alcoholic torn between his old and new lives. It brilliantly spotlights the groping hopes of Britain caught below the poverty line.

MULAN (U)
In Disney's animated feature, a girl dresses up as a soldier to spare her father from combat. It's got it all. A pro-active heroine; a strong father/daughter relationship; and, of course, cross-dressing. It's also among Disney's most visually innovative movies.

A PERFECT MURDER (15)
The news that Hitchcock's classic *Dial M for Murder* was to be rehashed did not bode well. But this is gold-plated trash: the sort of thing Hollywood does better than anyone else

THE PLAYER'S CLUB (18)
On the face of it, *The Players Club* affects to lift the lid on America's seedy black strip joints and shake its head disapprovingly at the sight. Trouble is that Mr Cube can't drag his camera away from all that sweet, honeyed flesh for long enough to make his point.

PRIMARY COLORS (15)
As Jack Stanton, John Travolta's performance amounts to a vaudeville impersonation of Clinton. It's a grotesque, bravura display. The film does brilliant things with narrative, symbolism and farce but doesn't leave viewers to draw their own conclusions.

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN (15)
Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks) is dispatched to seek out a young private behind enemy lines. Few viewers will emerge warmed by catharsis – it's the battle scenes which are branded on the memory.

SMALL SOLDIERS (PG)
Inventive children's adventure about a batch of toy soldiers brought to life by a military microchip. The director Joe Dante draws some nice parallels with his own best film, *Gremlins*.

SNAKE EYES (15)
Brian De Palma's Atlantic City-set conspiracy thriller plays its mystery plotline as a kind of quickie jigsaw. Our nominal puzzle-solver is Nic Cage's swaggering local cop, whose harried investigation soon brings him smack up against Gary Sinise's Navy commander.

STILL CRAZY (15)
Clement and La Frenais-scripted comedy about a bunch of 1970s rockers who reform their old band. Hailing from *The Full Monty* school of feel-good fodder, *Still Crazy* boasts charm and a clatter of gags.

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY (15)
Cameron Diaz and Matt Dillon star in this latest comedy from the pathologically tasteless writer-director team of Peter and Bobby Farrelly. But the film is basically a soft-centred romantic comedy.

THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG)
Peter Weir's comedy about a man (played by Jim Carrey) who discovers that his whole existence has been televised since birth. The film is very funny, due more to the cleverness of Andrew Niccol's script than its star's presence.

VELVET GOLDMINE (18)
The story of rock stars Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Myers) and Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor) is unravelled 10 years after the hoax assassination of Slade. Director Todd Haynes has created a film which is brimming with a sense of the possibilities of cinema.

CINEMA
COUNTRYWIDE

ABERDEEN
ODEON (08705-050007): Snake Eyes (15); Blade (18); The Real Blonde (15); Antz (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Mulan (U); Freeriders (U); Elizabeth (15)

VIRGIN (0541-202050): There's Something About Mary (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG); The Butcher Boy (15); Elizabeth (15); A Perfect Murder (15); Hope Floats (PG); Snake Eyes (15); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Deconstructing Harry (18); Small Soldiers (PG); My Name is Joe (15); Blade (18)

BIRMINGHAM
MAC (0121-440 3838): Rien Ne Va Plus (NC); Elizabeth (15)

ODEON (08705-050007): Hope Floats (PG); Barney's Great Adventure (U); Mulan (U); Batman & Robin (PG); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Elizabeth (15); Buffalo 66 (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); The Truman Show (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Snake Eyes (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Kundun (12); Blade (18)

ARCADIAN CENTRE VIRGIN (0541-555177): The Player's Club (18); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); There's Something About Mary (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Blade (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Hope Floats (PG); Antz (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Mulan (U); Halloween: H20 (18)

GREAT PARK VIRGIN (0121-453 0465): Blade (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Elizabeth (15); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Snake Eyes (15); Mulan (U); Dr Dolittle (PG); Hope Floats (PG); The Odd Couple II (15); Still Crazy (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); There's Something About Mary (15); The Truman Show (PG); Antz (PG)

BOLTON
WARNER VILLAGE (01204 669988): A Perfect Murder (15); Mulan (U); Small Soldiers (PG); Elizabeth (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); The Truman Show (PG); Blade (18); Antz (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Snake Eyes (15); Hope Floats (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Pyaar to Hona Hi Tha (NC); Halloween: H20 (18); Dr Dolittle (PG); Saving Private Ryan (15); The Mask (PG); Still Crazy (15)

CHESTER
ODEON (01244-343216): Dr Dolittle (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Elizabeth (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Mulan (U); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Antz (PG); Oscar and Lucinda (15); Godzilla (PG); Deep Rising (15); Blade (18)

VIRGIN (0541-555 158): The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Mulan (U); Elizabeth (15); Blade (18); Antz (PG); Snake Eyes (15); The Truman Show (PG); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Small Soldiers (PG)

CHESTERFIELD
CINEWORLD, ALMA LEISURE PARK (01246-277000): There's Something About Mary (15); Small Soldiers (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Hope Floats (PG); Blade (18); Still Crazy (15); Halloween: H20 (18); The Daytrippers (15); Jumanji (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Elizabeth (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); Snake Eyes (15)

COVENTRY
ODEON (08705-050007): Mulan (U); Snake Eyes (15); Paulie (U); Ulee's Gold (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Blade (18); The Truman Show (PG); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Godzilla (PG); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG)

EAST KILBRIDE
UCI (0990-888990): The Truman Show (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Halloween: H20 (18); A Perfect Murder (15); My Name is Joe (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Barney's Great Adventure (U); Mulan (U); Ever After (PG); Blade (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Antz (PG)

EDINBURGH
ABC FILM CENTRE (0131-228 1638): Flipper (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Hope Floats (PG); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG)

ABC WESTER HAILES (0131-442 2200): Primary Colors (15); Blade (18); Small Soldiers (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); The Truman Show (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); My Name is Joe (15); Snake Eyes (15); Antz (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Mulan (U); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18)

CAMEO (0131-228 4141): Eve's Bayou (15); Velvet Goldmine (18); Elizabeth (15); Hana-Bi (18); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Bandit Queen (18); My Name Is Joe (15); Razor Blade Smile (18); Storefront Hitchcock (NC); Swingers (15)

DOMINION (0131-447 4771): The Land Girls (12); Mulan (U); Small Soldiers (PG); Still Crazy (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Elizabeth (15); The Governess (15); Antz (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007): Blade (18); A Goofy Movie (U); Halloween: H20 (18); Live Flesh (18); Dr Dolittle (PG); Antz (PG); Mulan (U); Lost in Space (PG); Deep Rising (15); Snake Eyes (15); The Truman Show (PG); Elizabeth (15)

UCI (0990-888990): The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); My Name is Joe (15); Elizabeth (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Blade (18); Snake Eyes (15); Mulan (U); Still Crazy (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Saving Private Ryan (15); Halloween: H20 (18); There's Something About Mary (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Antz (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); The Odd Couple II (15)

GLASGOW
ABC CLARKSTON ROAD (0141-637 2641): Antz (PG); Hope Floats (PG); The Odd Couple II (15); Mulan (U); Small Soldiers (PG)

ABC SAUCHIEHALL ST (0141-332 1592): The Odd Couple II (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Mulan (U)

THE BOMBAY (0141-419 0722): Pyaar to Hona Hi Tha (NC); Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (NC); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); Guru Gobind Singh (NC)

CALEDONIAN GROSVENOR (0141-339 4298): Grease (20th Anniversary Edition) (PG); Antz (PG); Kundun (12); Lost in Space (PG); My Name is Joe (15); Mulan (U)

ODEON (08705-050007): Blade (18); Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Snake Eyes (15); Hope Floats (PG); Elizabeth (15); A Perfect Murder (15); Antz (PG); Mulan (U)

SPRINGFIELD QUAY (08705-050007): Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG); Zero Effect (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Snake Eyes (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Primary Colors (15); Hope Floats (PG); Mulan (U); Small Soldiers (PG); Antz (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); My Name is Joe (15); A Perfect Murder (15); Elizabeth (15); Left Luggage (PG); Blade (18)

VIRGIN FORGE PARKHEAD (0541-555136); Snake Eyes (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Mulan (U); Hope Floats (PG); Blade (18); My Name is Joe (15); Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Antz (PG)

HUDDERSFIELD
UCI (0990-888990): Small Soldiers (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Jaws (15); Hope Floats (PG); Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (NC); Snake Eyes (15); Barney's Great Adventure (U); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Mulan (U); The Truman Show (PG); Antz (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Blade (18); Elizabeth (15)

INVERNESS
EDEN COURT THEATRE (01463-234274); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Men with Guns (15); Sansho the Bailiff (PG)

CALEDONIAN (01463-233302): Grease (20th Anniversary Edition) (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); Blade (18)

WARNER VILLAGE (01463-711147): Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Mulan (U); My Name Is Joe (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Hope Floats (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); The Abyss (12); Antz (PG); Blade (18)

LEEDS
ABC (0113-245 2665): Hope Floats (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Antz (PG)

WARNER VILLAGE (0113-279 9855); Saving Private Ryan (15); Blade (18); Mulan (U); Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); A Perfect Murder (15); Hope Floats (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Snake Eyes (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Antz (PG); Still Crazy (15); Elizabeth (15); There's Something About Mary (15)

LEICESTER
ODEON FREEMENS PARK (08705-050007); The Truman Show (PG); Elizabeth (15); There's Something About Mary (15); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Live Flesh (18); Mulan (U); Hope Floats (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); MouseHunt (PG); Ever After (PG); The Land Girls (12); Antz (PG); Middleton's Changeling (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Snake Eyes (15); Blade (18); Velvet Goldmine (18); Titanic (12); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Paulie (U); Saving Private Ryan (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Flubber (U)

WARNER VILLAGE (0116-282 7733); Elizabeth (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Small Soldiers (PG); A Perfect Murder (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Blade (18); Snake Eyes (15); Saving Private Ryan (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (NC); Hope Floats (PG); Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); The Truman Show (PG); There's Something About Mary (15)

LIVERPOOL
ABC ALLERTON (0151-724 3550); Antz (PG); Paulie (U); Small Soldiers (PG)

ODEON (08705-050007): Blade (18); Elizabeth (15); Halloween: H20 (18); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Snake Eyes (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG)

SWITCH ISLAND LEISURE PARK (0151-525 2020); Hope Floats (PG); A Perfect Murder (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Lost in Space (PG); Blade (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Small Soldiers (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Anastasia (U); Snake Eyes (15); Godzilla (PG); Fear end Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Razor Blade Smile (18); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Dr Dolittle (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Mulan (U); There's Something About Mary (15); Still Crazy (15); Antz (PG)

VIRGIN (0541-555146); Blade (18); Mulan (U); Small Soldiers (PG); Snake Eyes (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Halloween: H20 (18); Hope Floats (PG); Antz (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); The Truman Show (PG)

WOOLTON PICTURE HOUSE (0151-428 1919); The Land Girls (12); Antz (PG)

MANCHESTER
ARENA SEVEN (0161-839 0700); Mulan (U); Blade (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Antz (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Snake Eyes (15); Elizabeth (15); Hope Floats (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18)

CINECITY (0161-445 8181); The Truman Show (PG); Mulan (U); Snake Eyes (15); Small Soldiers (PG); There's Something About Mary (5)

ODEON (08705-050007); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Mulan (U); The Truman Show (PG); Antz (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Blade (18); Zero Effect (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Elizabeth (15); Hope Floats (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Sliding Doors (15)

UCI TRAFFORD CENTRE (0870-603 4567); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Mehndi (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); A Perfect Murder (15); Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (NC); Lethal Weapon 4 (15); The Odd Couple II (15); Hope Floats (PG); Antz (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Primary Colors (15); The Land Girls (12); Small Soldiers (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Left Luggage (PG); Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG); Mulan (U); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); Elizabeth (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Blade (18); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Halloween: H20 (18)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
ODEON (08705-050007); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); The Truman Show (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Mulan (U); Blade (18); Snake Eyes (15); Oscar and Lucinda (15); Antz (PG)

WARNER VILLAGE (0191-2210222); The Truman Show (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Antz (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Mulan (U); Still Crazy (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Hope Floats (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Saving Private Ryan (15); Blade (18); Elizabeth (15); Halloween: H20 (18)

PRESTON
UCI 10 (0990-888990); The Truman Show (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); Elizabeth (15); Antz (PG); Mulan (U); Halloween: H20 (18); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Barney's Great Adventure (U); There's Something About Mary (15); Snake Eyes (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Blade (18); The Spanish Prisoner (PG)

WARNER VILLAGE (01772-881100); Hope Floats (PG); Snake Eyes (15); The Truman Show (PG); Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Mulan (U); Halloween: H20 (18); Still Crazy (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Blade (18); Antz (PG); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Small Soldiers (PG)

SHEFFIELD
ODEON (08705-050007); Godzilla (PG); The Odd Couple II (15); There's Something About Mary (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Elizabeth (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Blade (18); City of Angels (12); The Truman Show (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Snake Eyes (15); Mulan (U); Dr Dolittle (PG); Antz (PG); Ever After (PG); Hope Floats (PG)

VIRGIN (Dom Valley) (0114-242 1237); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Sliding Doors (15); The Odd Couple II (15); Antz (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Prem Aggan (NC); Elizabeth (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Snake Eyes (15); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Mulan (U); A Perfect Murder (15); Hope Floats (PG); Lethal Weapon 4 (15); Primary Colors (15); The Land Girls (12); Velvet Goldmine (18); Blade (18); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Ever After (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Still Crazy (15); The Truman Show (PG)

WARNER VILLAGE (0114-256 9222); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Mulan (U); The Truman Show (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Hope Floats (PG); Still Crazy (15); Snake Eyes (15); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Elizabeth (15); Blade (18); There's Something About Mary (15); Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Saving Private Ryan (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18)

UCI CRYSTAL PEAKS 10 (0990-888990); Ever After (PG); There's Something About Mary (15); Still Crazy (15); Snake Eyes (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Prem Aggan (NC); Hope Floats (PG); Antz (PG); Barney's Great Adventure (U); Elizabeth (15); Dr Dolittle (PG); Blade (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Small Soldiers (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Mulan (U)

TAMWORTH
UCI 10 (0990-888990); Halloween: H20 (18); The Castle (15); Hope Floats (PG); Ever After (PG); Snake Eyes (15); Something About Mary (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); The Truman Show (PG); Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (NC); Antz (PG); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Elizabeth (15); Barney's Great Adventure (U); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Dr Dolittle (PG); Blade (18); Mulan (U); Saving Private Ryan (15); Still Crazy (15); Small Soldiers (PG)

WAKEFIELD
CINEWORLD THE MOVIES (01924-332230); Halloween: H20 (18); Snake Eyes (15); Saving Private Ryan (15); Blade (18); Full Metal Jacket (18); There's Something About Mary (15); Hope Floats (PG); Jumanji (PG); The Odd Couple II (15); The Truman Show (PG); Apocalypse Now (18); Antz (PG); Elizabeth (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Small Soldiers (PG); The Daytrippers (15); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); Problem Child (PG); Mulan (U); Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (PG); Still Crazy (15); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Ever After (PG)

WIGAN
VIRGIN (0541 - 555150); Mulan (U); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Small Soldiers (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); Antz (PG); The Magic Sword: Quest for Camelot (U); Blade (18); Saving Private Ryan (15); Hope Floats (PG); The Truman Show (PG); Snake Eyes (15); There's Something About Mary (15)

WREXHAM
ODEON (08705-050007); Buffalo 66 (15); There's Something About Mary (15); Elizabeth (15); Mulan (U); Antz (PG); Barney's Great Adventure (U); Dr Dolittle (PG); Halloween: H20 (18); The Wedding Singer (12); Snake Eyes (15); Small Soldiers (PG); Good Burger (PG); Grease (20th Anniversary Edition) (PG); Paulie (U); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); The Truman Show (PG); Blade (18); Hope Floats (PG); Lost in Space (PG); Godzilla (PG); MouseHunt (PG)

YORK
CITY SCREEN (01904-612940); Journey to the Beginning of the World (Viagem ao Principio do Mundo) (U); Three Colours Trilogy (15); Cousin Bette (15); The General (15); Majorettes in Space: Five Gay Tales from France (18); The Last Days of Disco (15)

ODEON (08705-050007); Mulan (U); Snake Eyes (15); The Wings of the Dove (15); Blade (18); The Real Blonde (15); Antz (PG)

WARNER VILLAGE (01904-691094); Saving Private Ryan (15); The Odd Couple II (15); Halloween: H20 (18); Snake Eyes (15); Antz (PG); Small Soldiers (PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Hope Floats (PG); Blade (18); Mulan (U); Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18); Roald Dahl's Matilda (PG); Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18); There's Something About Mary (15); The Exorcist (25th Anniversary Rerelease) (18); Still Crazy (15); Elizabeth (15); The Truman Show (PG)

CINEMA
REPERTORY

BIRMINGHAM
AUSTIN COURT: BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION FESTIVAL (0121-212 0999) Independent's Day III: Event (NC) Thur 10am

ELECTRIC (0121-643 7277) Cube (15) Sat, Sun 1pm, 4.55pm, 9pm; also Mon-Thur 4.55pm, 9pm The Wings of the Dove (15) Sat, Sun 2.10pm, 6.35pm; also Mon 6.35pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels (18) Sat, Sun 2.55pm, 6.50pm; also Mon-Thur 6.50pm Mrs Brown (PG) Sat-Mon 4.30pm, 8.45pm Lolita (18) Tue-Thur 4.15pm, 8.45pm Love and Death on Long Island (15) Tue, Wed 6.50pm; also Thur 2.20pm, 6.50pm

ODEON: INTERNATIONAL BIRMINGHAM FILM AND TELEVISION FESTIVAL (0121-643 6103) Gods and Monsters (NC) Wed 6.45pm The Bride of Frankenstein (15) Thur 6.30pm

CUSTARD FACTORY (0121-604 7777) Carry on Cripples: Event (NC) Thur 8.30pm

MAC: BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FILM and TELEVISION FESTIVAL (0121-440 3838) William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet (12) Thur 1.30pm The Eel (18) Thur 8.30pm My Name is Joe (15) Thur 9pm

THE NIGHTINGALE: BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL FILM and TELEVISION FESTIVAL (0121-622 1718) (E)Quality TV: Event (NC) Thur 6.30pm

BRADFORD
NMPFT (PICTUREVILLE) (01274-732277) Godzilla (PG) Sat 11am The Longest Day (U) Sat 2pm Elizabeth (15) Sat 5.45pm, 8.15pm The Life & Death of Colonel Blimp (U) Sun 2.30pm; also Mon 3pm Sixth Happiness (NC) Sun 5.30pm The Bollywood Movie (NC) Sun 7.30pm Bombay (12) Mon 6pm Memories of Underdevelopment (15) Tue 1.45pm, 8pm The Daytrippers (15) Tue, Thur 6pm; also Wed 5.15pm Das Boot: The Director's Cut (15) Wed 1.30pm, 7pm Alice in the Cities (U) Thur 8pm

COVENTRY
WARWICK ARTS CENTRE (01203-524524) La Vie Revée des Anges (18) Sat, Mon, Wed 9pm; also Sun 4pm, Tue 6.30pm Velvet Goldmine (18) Sat 4pm, 6.30pm; also Sun 7.30pm, Mon, Wed 6.30pm, Tue, Thur 9pm Sons of the Desert & Helpmates (U) Thur 6.30pm

DERBY
METRO (01332-347765) Kundun (12) Sat 6pm; also Sun 8pm Scream 2 (18) Sat 8.45pm Men with Guns (15) Sun 5.30pm; also Tue, Thur 8.15pm, Wed 6pm Cousin Bette (15) Tue, Thur 6pm; also Wed 8.30pm

DUBLIN
IRISH FILM CENTRE (00 353 1-679 3477) Henry Fool (18) Sat 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm; also Sun-Fri 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm Afterglow (15) Sat, Sun 6.30pm, 8.50pm; also Mon, Wed 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm, Tue, Thur 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 8.50pm Now Voyager (PG) Thur 6.30pm

EDINBURGH
FILMHOUSE (0131-228 2688) Henry Fool (18) Sat, Mon-Thur 2.30pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm; also Sun 1pm, 6.15pm, 9pm, Fri 2pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries (15) Sat 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm; also Sun 5.50pm, 8.30pm, Mon, Tue 3pm, 8.30pm, Wed 3pm, Thur 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm La Vie Revée des Anges (18) Sat, Sun, Thur 6.20pm; also Mon, Tue 3.30pm, 8.15pm, Wed 8.15pm Funny Games (18) Sat 8.40pm; also Sun, Thur 3.30pm, 8.40pm, Mon, Tue 6pm, Wed 3.30pm, 6pm Bicycle Thieves (U) Sun 2pm; also Mon 6.30pm The Hunger (18) Wed 6.30pm

GLASGOW
FILM THEATRE (0141-332 8128) A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries (15) Sat 12.45pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm; also Sun 1.30pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm, Mon, Wed 12.45pm, 3.15pm, 8.15pm, Tue 2pm, 4.30pm, Thur 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 8.15pm My Name Is Joe (15) Sat, Sun, Tue-Thur 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm; also Mon 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm, Fri 3pm, 6pm, 8.30pm The Eighth Day (PG) Sat 3 15pm Kissed (18) Sun 4pm Daens (15) Mon 5.30pm Je, Tu, Il, Elle (18) Thur 6.30pm

LANCASTER
THE DUKES PLAYHOUSE (01524-66645) Le Bossu (15) Sat 6pm The Last Days of Disco (15) Sat 8.30pm; also Sun 8pm, Mon 6pm He Got Game (18) Mon, Wed 8.15pm; also Tue, Thur 6pm Dream with the Fishes (18) Tue 8.30pm; also Wed 6pm Shock Corridor (15) Thur 8.45pm

LEICESTER
PHOENIX ARTS (0116-255 4854) Barney's Great Adventure (U) Sat 2.30pm Paths of Glory (NC) Sun 3pm A Shadow of Doubt (15) Sun 5.30pm The Spanish Prisoner (PG) Sun 8.30pm Dance of the Wind (U) Tue 6.05pm Zero Effect (15) Tue 6.05pm; also Wed 8.45pm, Fri 8.30pm

MANCHESTER
CORNERHOUSE (0161-200 1500) Funny Games (18) Sat, Sun, Tue, Wed 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.25pm, 8.40pm; also Mon 6.25pm, 8.40pm, Thur 1.55pm, 5.40pm, Fri 2pm, 8.10pm The Governess (15) Sat, Sun 1.55pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm Character (15) Sat 2pm, 5.45pm, 8.10pm; also Sun 2pm, 8.10pm, Mon, Thur 5.45pm, 8.10pm, Tue 8.20pm, Wed 8.10pm, Fri 5.45pm Peter Greenaway: Acts of God: Shorts (NC) Sun 5.45pm The Threepenny Opera (NC) Tue 2pm, 5.45pm The Man Who Fell to Earth (18) Wed 2pm, 5.45pm A Taste of Honey (NC) Thur 6.30pm, 8.30pm The Opposite of Sex (18) Thur 7.45pm

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
TYNESIDE (0191-232 8289) Fast Times at Ridgemont High (18)/Clerks (18) Sat 11pm Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (U) Sat 1.30pm Delicatessen (15)/Day of the Beast Sat 2.30pm The Acid House Trilogy (NC) Sat 3.30pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm; also Sun 8.15pm, Mon 3.30pm, 8.15pm, Tue 3.30pm, Wed 6pm, Thur 6.15pm Caresses (18) Sat 4pm, 8.30pm; also Sun 1pm Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18) Sat 6pm; also Sun 5.30pm, Mon 3.15pm, 8pm, Tue 5.45pm, Wed 3.15pm, 5.45pm, Thur 3.30pm, Fri 8pm Day of the Beast (18) Sun 2.30pm Silent Running (PG)/Dark Star (PG) Sun 7pm Beyond the Valley of the Dolls (18) Mon 5.45pm Gadjo Dilo (15) Mon 6pm; also Tue 3.30pm, 8.15pm, Wed 4pm, Thur 8.30pm Sixth Happiness (NC) Tue 6.15pm; also Wed 8.15pm, Thur 4pm, 8pm Dr Strangelove (PG) Thur 6pm

NOTTINGHAM
BROADWAY (0115-952 6611) The Fifth Element (PG) Sat 3pm Rien Ne Va Plus (15) Sat, Sun 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.15pm; also Mon-Thur 6pm, 8.15pm Cube (15) Sat, Wed, Thur 6pm; also Sun-Tue 8.15pm Topless Women Talk About Their Lives (NC) Sat, Wed, Thur 8.15pm; also Sun-Tue 6pm Ma Vie En Rose (12) Sun 3.30pm

SHEFFIELD
THE SHOWROOM (0114-275 7727) Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (18) Sat 2.10pm, 4.50pm, 7.20pm, 9.45pm; also Sun 2.30pm, 5.20pm, 7.50pm, Mon-Thur 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, Fri 3.30pm, 6pm Henry Fool (18) Sat 2.10pm, 4.50pm, 7.30pm; also Sun 5pm, 7.45pm, Mon, Tue 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm, Wed 3pm, 8.15pm, Thur 2.30pm, 8.15pm, Fri 1.40pm, 6.20pm Sons of the Desert & Helpmates (U) Sun 2.30pm Funny Games (18) Sat 2.40pm, 4.50pm, 10.15pm; also Sun 2.50pm, 5pm, Mon, Wed 4.15pm, 8.45pm, Tue, Thur 2pm, 6.30pm Benjamin Dove (NC) Sat 4pm Secret Défense (PG) Sat 7pm; also Sun 7.10pm, Mon, Wed 7.40pm, Tue 2.40pm, 7.40pm, Thur 4.40pm Razor Blade Smile (18) Sat 10.15pm Bonjour Timothy (NC) Sun 4pm The Last Days of Disco (15) Sat 7.30pm, 9.50pm; also Sun 5.45pm, 8pm, Mon, Wed 2pm, 6.30pm, Tue, Thur 4.10pm, 8.40pm Girls' Night (15) Mon 2pm, 3.50pm, 6pm; also Tue 6pm, Wed 2pm, 6.50pm, Thur 2.30pm If… (15) Wed 1pm, 6pm The German Sisters (15) Thur 6pm Tout Va Bien (NC) Thur 8pm

THEATRE
COUNTRYWIDE

BIRMINGHAM
THE BILLESLEY PUBLIC HOUSE Our Day Out Willy Russell's comedy about a group of inner city school children on a special day out. 16-24 Nov. 7.30pm. £4.50-£6, concs £3.50-£5. Brook Lane, King's Heath (0121-444 0933)

BIRMINGHAM REP Three Sisters Mike Poulton's new translation of Chekhov's tale of sexual repression stars Charles Dance as Vershinin. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mats 14 & 19 Nov, 2.30pm, ends 21 Nov. £7.25-£19, concs available. Broad Street (0121-236 4455)

THE DOOR - BIRMINGHAM REP STUDIO Twins Maureen Lawrence's drama looks at the tangled lives of twin sisters. 14, 16-18 Nov, 7.45pm, mats 14 & 18 Nov, 2.45pm. £9, concs £7, standbys & previews £5. Confidence Drama from prolific playwright Judy Upton. 19-25 Nov, 7.45pm. £9, concs £7, standby & previews £5. Broad Street (0121-236 4455)

BRADFORD
ALHAMBRA THEATRE The Rocky Horror Show Jason Donovan stars in the classic rock'n'roll musical. 14 Nov, 6pm & 9pm. £7.50-£20.50.
The Importance of Being Earnest Liza Goddard and Dora Bryan star in Oscar Wilde's comedy of verbal pyrotechnics. 16-21 Nov, 7.30pm, mat 18 Nov, 2pm. £6.50-£18.50. Morley Street (01274-752000)

COVENTRY
WARWICK ARTS CENTRE Handbag or The Importance of Being Someone Mark Ravenhill's new drama. 14 Nov, 7.45pm. £8.
A Clockwork Orange Anthony Burgess' provocative and disturbing tale of youth violence. 17-21 Nov, 7.30pm. £9.50-£14.
Beggar's Belief New piece from Trestle Theatre inspired by the paintings of Breugel. 20 & 21 Nov, 7.45pm. £8. Gibbet Hill Road (01203-524524)

EDINBURGH
ASSEMBLY ROOMS HUM A doctor loses her identity while seeking that of her patient. 14 Nov, 7.45pm. £6, concs £4. George Street (0131-220 4349)

KING'S THEATRE The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie Fiona Shaw stars as the Scottish schoolmistress in this adaptation of Muriel Spark's classic novel. 14 Nov, 2.30pm & 7.30pm. £14-£20, concs available.
Girls' Night Out in Ibiza Lads and lasses in a steaming frenzy, Ibiza style. From 16 Nov, Mon-Thur 8pm, Fri-Sat 6pm & 9pm, ends 21 Nov. £10-£14, concs available. Leven Street (0131-529 6000)

ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE The Collector The stage adaptation of John Fowles' psychological thriller. Tue-Sat 7.45pm, mats 11 & 14 Nov, 2.30pm ends 21 Nov. £7-£16, concs from £1. Grindlay Street (0131-229 9697)

THEATRE WORKSHOP Squealin' Like a Pig Drama about the topical issues of bullying and racism among children. 14 Nov, Thur-Sat, 8pm. £6, concs £3.50. Hamilton Place (0131-226 5425/cc 226 5425)

GLASGOW
ARCHES THEATRE Under Milk Wood New production of Dylan Thomas' enchanting and surreal tale. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, ends 28 Nov. £6.50, concs £3.50.
Detour Two couples co-exist in 1966 Dodge Dart in this static road movie. 14 Nov, 8pm. £6.50, concs £3.50. Midland Street (0141-221 4001)

CITIZENS THEATRE The Homecoming Harold Pinter's ominous tale of dominant sexuality within a family. 14 Nov, 7.30pm. £8, concs £2. Gorbals Street (0141-429 0022)

CITIZENS THEATRE: CIRCLE STUDIO Medea Seneca's classic story of vengeance and pain. Tue-Sat, 7.30pm, ends 21 Nov. £8, concs £2. Gorbals (0141-429 0022)

RAMSHORN THEATRE Show Me The Way to the Next Whisky Bar Songs and poetry from Brecht, Weill and contemporaries. 19-21 Nov, 10.30pm. £5, concs £2.50. Ingram Street (0141-287 5511)

THEATRE ROYAL A Midsummer Night's Dream An Oxford Stage Company production. 17-21 Nov, 7.15pm, mat Thur 2.15pm. £4.40-£16.50, concs available Tue-Thur only, mat £5 & £10. Hope Street (0141-332 9000/cc 331 1234)

HULL
TRUCK THEATRE King Arthur and the Knights of the Occasional Table Comedy duo Maggie Fox and Sue Ryding tackle the famous Arthurian legend. 17 Nov, 8pm. £8, concs £6. Spring Street (01482-224800)

LEEDS
GRAND THEATRE Jesus Christ Superstar Tim Rice and Lloyd Webber's acclaimed biblical musical. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mats Thur & Sat 2.30pm, ends 28 Nov. £5.50-£24. New Briggate (0113-222 6222)

THE STUDIO THEATRE Sell Out Frantic Assembly's latest multi-media performance. 18 & 19 Nov, 7.30pm. £6, concs £3.50. Calverley Street (0113-283 5998)

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: COURTYARD THEATRE The Seagull Jude Kelly directs Ian McKellen and Clare Higgins in Chekhov's love story. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, mats 14 & 18 Nov, 2pm, ends 5 Dec. £8.50-£17, concs available. Quarry Hill Mount (0113-213 7700)

WEST YORKSHIRE PLAYHOUSE: QUARRY THEATRE The Trackers Of Oxyrhynchus Tony Harrison's comedy about the search for a long-lost play. 14 Nov, 7.30pm. £8.50-£17.50, concs available.
Our Country's Good Study of the civilising power of theatre. 17-21 Nov, 7.30pm. £8.50-£17, concs available. Quarry Hill Mount (0113-213 7700)

LEICESTER
HAYMARKET THEATRE Disco Pigs Acclaimed love story from Enda Walsh. 14 Nov, 7.45pm. £9, concs £6.
Richard III In-house production. Mon-Sat 7.30pm (no perf 16 Nov), mats 14 Nov, 2.30pm, 18 Nov, 2pm, ends 21 Nov. £5-£14.50, concs available. Belgrave Gate (0116-253 9797)

HAYMARKET THEATRE STUDIO Berkoff's Women Linda Marlowe reveals Steven Berkoff's thoughts on being a woman. 14 Nov, 7.45pm. £9, concs £6. Belgrave Gate (0116-2539797)

LIVERPOOL
EVERYMAN THEATRE Shockheaded Peter Brilliant junk opera, featuring the Tiger Lilies. 14 Nov, 2.30pm & 8pm. £7.50-£11.95, concs £5.50-£9.95. Hope Street (0151-709 4776)

METROPLITAN CATHEDRAL Animal Farm The Theatre of No Importance present Sir Peter Hall's adaptation of George Orwell's story of an animal revolution. 14 Nov, 8pm. £3.50, concs £2.75. Mount Pleasant (0151-291 5374)

MANCHESTER
THE GREEN ROOM Dirty Work Provocative piece from Forced Entertainment. 18-21 Nov, 7.30pm. £7, concs £4. Whitworth Street West (0161-950 5900)

LIBRARY THEATRE A Doll's House Chris Honer directs the Library Theatre Company in a new version of Ibsen's timeless drama. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, mats 18 Nov, 2.30pm, ends 21 Nov. £8-£15, concs available. Central Library, St Peter's Square (0161-236 7110)

OPERA HOUSE Oliver! Russ Abbot (from 16 Nov Gary Wilmot) stars in Lionel Bart's Dickensian musical. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, Wed & Sat 2.30pm, ends 30 Jan. £10-£29. Quay Street (0161-242 2503/cc 831 7733)

PALACE THEATRE Smokey Joe's Cafe - The Songs of Leiber and Stoller The rock'n'roll hitmakers celebrated in a musical revue that includes "Jailhouse Rock". 14 Nov, 2.30pm & 7.30pm. £10.50-£22.50. Oxford Street (0161-242 2525)

MOLD
CLWYD THEATR CYMRU The Norman Conquests: Living Together Alan Ayckbourn's comedy about an evening of dandelion wine and a home-made board game. 14, 25-27 Nov, 7.30pm, mats 14 Nov, 2pm, mats Nov 21, 5 Dec, 3pm. £5-£15, concs available.
Krapp's Last Tape Edward Petherbridge performs Samuel Beckett's melancholic piece. 14 Nov, 2.15pm & 7.45pm. £8-£10.
Of Mice and Men John Steinbeck's tale of two itinerant farm-workers and their dreams of a better life. 16-21 Nov, 7.45pm. £12, concs £9.50.
The Norman Conquests: Round and Round The Garden Alan Ayckbourn's comedy about attempted and failed adultery. 17-19, 21, 23-24, 28, 30 Nov, 5 Dec, 7.30pm. £5-£15, concs available. Civic Centre (01352-755114)

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NEWCASTLE PLAYHOUSE Lord of the Flies Stage version of William Golding's classic tale of schoolboys living on a deserted island. 14 Nov, 7.30pm. £6-£12.75, concs available. Barras Bridge (0191-230 5151)

THEATRE ROYAL The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie Fiona Shaw stars as the Scottish schoolmistress in this new adaptation of the classic novel by Muriel Spark. 14-21 Nov, 7.30pm, mat 19 Nov, 2pm. £5-£25, concs available. Grey Street (0191-232 2061).

NORTHAMPTON
ROYAL THEATRE Dead Funny The late British comedians provide the focus for Terry Johnson's poignant comedy. Mon-Sat 7.30pm (14 Nov, 5pm & 8.30pm), ends 28 Nov. £4-£14.50. Guildhall Road (01604-632 533)

PRESTON
CHARTER THEATRE King Arthur and the Knights of The Occasional Table Comedy duo Maggie Fox and Sue Ryding tackle the famous Arthurian legend. 16 Nov, 7.30pm. £8. Lancaster Road (01772-258858)

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE The Football Factory Drama based on the adult cult novel by John King. 2? Nov, 7.30pm. £4/£3. (01772-893001)

SCARBOROUGH
FUTURIST THEATRE Girls' Night Out Hen-night comedy by Dave Simpson. 16-21 Nov, 7.30pm. £8.50-£12.50. Foreshore Road (01723-370742)

STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE: THE ROUND A Doll's House Ibsen's classic is directed by Alan Ayckbourn. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, ends 21 Nov. £7-£12.50. Westborough (01723-370541/cc 378863)

SHEFFIELD
CRUCIBLE THEATRE Twelfth Night Michael Grandage directs. Mon-Sat 7.30pm. £10-£14.50, concs available. Norfolk Street (0114-276 9922)

LYCEUM THEATRE Gentlemen Prefer Blondes Sara Crowe stars in this musical featuring the song "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend". 14 Nov, 3pm & 7.45pm. £8-£18.50, concs available Mon-Fri. Norfolk Street (0114-276 9922)

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE Richard III Robert Lindsay stars as the historical villain. 14 Nov, 1.30pm & 7.30pm. £7-£35. Waterside (01789-295623)

YORK
GRAND OPERA HOUSE Popcorn Emma Noble stars in Ben Elton's satire on cinema violence. 16-19 Nov, 7.30pm, 20 Nov, 6pm & 9pm, 21 Nov, 5pm & 8pm. £10.50-£16.50, concs available. Cumberland Street (01904-671818)

THEATRE ROYAL Bouncers John Godber's ubiquitous comedy. Mon-Thur 7.30pm, Fri & Sat 8pm, 14 & 20 Nov, 9pm, ends 21 Nov. £4-£12. St Leonards Place (01904-623568)

THEATRE
WEST END

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE
OLIVIER: Antony and Cleopatra Helen Mirren and Alan Rickman star. Mon-Sat 7pm, mats 1.30pm, ends 3 Dec.

COTTESLOE: Guiding Star Jonathan Harvey's new play gives a tender account of the life of Hillsborough disaster survivor. In rep. Tonight 7pm, continuing. Olivier & Lyttelton: £8-£27. Cottesloe: £12-£18. Day seats from 10am. South Bank, SE1 (0171-452 3000) ⊖ Embankment.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
THE BARBICAN: The School for Scandal Sheridan's biting 18th-century satire. Mon-Sat 7.15pm, mats 1.45pm, ends 21 Nov.

THE PIT: Troilus and Cressida Shakespeare's depiction of the human spirit undermined by bloody warfare. ends 21 Nov. Barbican Theatre: £5-£26. The Pit: £11-£18.50 Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891) ⊖ Barbican.

EXHIBITIONS

BIRMINGHAM
BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY RJ Washington: Memorial Exhibition Ceramics capturing the female form. Mon-Thur 10am-5pm, Fri 10.30am-5pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 12.30pm-5pm, ends 10 Jan, free.
Burne-Jones Important work by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Mon-Thur, Sat 10am-5pm, Fri 10.30am-5pm, Sun 12.30pm-5pm, ends 17 Jan. £5, £3.50 concs, £14 family. Chamberlain Square (0121-303 2834)

BOSTON
GUILDHALL MUSEUM Pop Prints Prints from the Arts Council Collection including Lichtenstein and Warhol. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, ends 21 Nov. £1.20, concs 80p, children free. South Street (01205-365954)

DURHAM
DURHAM LIGHT INFANTRY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY Disasters of War: Callot, Goya, Dix Selections from three artists' war etchings. Tue-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm, ends 15 Nov. 60p, child 25p. Aykley Heads (0191-384 2214)

EDINBURGH
CITY ART CENTRE Alice Maher and Tim Davies Leading artists Maher and Davies exhibit unusual new work exploring a range of concerns. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 12noon-5pm, ends 4 Jan, free. Market Street (0131-529 3993)

GLASGOW
ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM, KELVINGROVE BT Dialogue in the Dark Explore the senses in sound, scent and touch exhibits. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm, ends 10 Jan, free. (0141-287 2699)

LEEDS
HENRY MOORE INSTITUTE Les Cambodgiennes: Auguste Rodin Drawings made during the Royal Cambodian dance company's tour to France. Mon-Sun 10am-5.30pm, Wed 10am-9pm, ends 3 Jan, free. The Headrow (0113-234 3158)

LIVERPOOL
MUSEUM OF LIVERPOOL LIFE Fawcett's Funny Girls: Cartooning for Equality Over 100 years of cartoons. Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Sun 12noon-5pm, ends 6 Dec. NMGM 12 month pass, £3, concs £1.50, family £7.50. Mann Island (0151-207 0001)

MANCHESTER
CORNERHOUSE Peter Greenaway Paintings, drawings and prints by the film-maker. Tue-Sat 11am-6pm, Sun 2pm-6pm, ends 6 Dec, free. Oxford Street (0161-228 2463)

SHEFFIELD
GRAVES ART GALLERY Double Games: Sophie Calle Comprehensive retrospective of Calle's work. In two venues. Opens 14 Nov, Tue-Sat 10am-5pm, ends 30 Jan, free. Surrey Street (0114-273 5158)

YORK
YORK CITY ART GALLERY Venice Through Canaletto's Eyes Twenty-three paintings and drawings by the Venetian artist. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30pm-5pm, ends 3 Jan, free. Exhibition Square (01904-551861)

CLASSICAL

BIRMINGHAM
CBSO CENTRE Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/Gruber Music by Judith Weir, Simon Bainbridge and Kurt Schwertsik with Gruber's own Frankenstein!!. 15 Nov, 7.30pm. £9, concs £5. Berkeley Street (0121-616 6500)

EDINBURGH
FESTIVAL THEATRE Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Bamert Matthias Bamert conducts Strauss, Sibelius, Martinu and Torke. 15 Nov, 7.30pm. £7-£19.50, concs available Nicolson Street (0131-529 6000)

GLASGOW
BARONY HALL Goldberg Chamber Orchestra/Layfield Including Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto and Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. 20 Nov, 7.30pm. £8, concs £5. High Street (0141-548 3444)

SHEFFIELD
CITY HALL Warsaw Philharmonic/Kord Including Chopin's 2nd Piano Concerto with Ewa Poblocka as soloist. 14 Nov, 7pm. £9.50-£19.50. Barkers Pool (0114-278 9789)

OPERA

ABERDEEN
HIS MAJESTY'S The Magic Flute Scottish Opera staging of Mozart's late singspiel, directed by Martin Duncan. 14 Nov, 7.15pm. £5-£36.50, concs available. Rosemount Viaduct (01224-641122)

BIRMINGHAM
MAC The Master and Margarita Millennium Opera with Darryl Way's new work based on the classic novel by Bulgakov. 14 Nov, 8pm. £7.25, concs £5.30. Cannon Hill Park (0121-440 3838)

EDINBURGH
FESTIVAL THEATRE Tristan Und Isolde Wagner's epic tale of passion performed by Scottish Opera. 17 & 21 Nov, 5pm. £10.50-£49.50, concs available.
The Magic Flute See Aberdeen. 18 & 20 Nov, 7.15pm. £9.50-£45.50, concs available. Nicolson Street (0131-529 6000)

DANCE

BLACKBURN
KING GEORGE'S HALL Vienna Festival Ballet: Swan Lake Performed under Peter Mallek's direction. 19 Nov, 7.30pm. £11.50-£13.50, concs £9.50 £11.50, child £5. Northgate (01254-582582)

BLACKPOOL
GRAND THEATRE Michael Clark Dance Company Clark's first full length work in four years. 14 Nov, 8pm. £12-£14.50. Church Street (01253-290190)

MANCHESTER
PALACE THEATRE English National Ballet: Cinderella Michael Corder's award-winning production. 16-21 Nov, 7.30pm, mats 18 Nov, 2pm, 21 Nov, 2.30pm. £5-£27.50. Oxford Street (0161-242 2525)

LITERATURE

COVENTRY
UNDER MILK WOOD SUITE - STAN TRACEY AND PHILIP MADOC The Dylan Thomas festival reaches its climax with a special performance by legendary jazz pianist Stan Tracey, with readings from Welsh actor Philip Madoc. 14 Nov, 9pm, £12.50.
HELEN DUNMORE Orange prize winning author of A Spell of Winter reads from her compelling novel, Your Blue-Eyed Boy. Warwick Arts Centre Gibbet Hill Road (01203-524524) 16 Nov, 7.15pm, £4.

HULL
HULL LITERATURE FESTIVAL Visitors include Kate Adie, Barrie Rutter, Ian MacMillan, Wendy Cope, Armando Iannucci and Benjamin Zephaniah. Hull Literature Festival 1998 c/o City Arts Unit, Central Library (01482-616876) 11-22 Nov, phone for details

SCARBOROUGH
PLATFORM: JANE ASHER Talk and Q&A session with actress, cake maker and writer. Stephen Joseph Theatre Westborough (01723-370541) 19 Nov, 6pm, £4.

COMEDY

ABERDEEN
ROB NEWMAN AT ABERDEEN MUSIC HALL Newman returns to his stand-up comic roots. 18 Nov, 8pm, £10. Union Street (01224-641122)

HULL
ARMANDO IANNUCCI: OUT OF HIS BOX AT HULL TRUCK THEATRE Best known for the satirical show, Friday Night Armistice. 19 Nov, 8pm, £10, concs £8. Spring Street (01482-224800)

INVERNESS
ARDAL O'HANLON - SPINNING PLATES AT EDEN COURT THEATRE The star of Father Ted. 19 Nov, 8pm, £12.50, concs £11. Bishops Road (01463-234234)

LIVERPOOL
LEE HURST - UN-IRONED AT LIVERPOOL EMPIRE The star of They think it's all over. 20 Nov, 8pm, £11. Lime Street (0151-709 1555)

CLUBS

BIRMINGHAM
GODSKITCHEN AT THE SANCTUARY Seb Fontaine and Tall Paul Newman star at this house'n'garage party. 20 Nov, 9.30pm-4am, £8, £7 before 11pm, mems £6. Digbeth (0121-246 1010)

GLASGOW
COLOURS AT THE ARCHES Top flight line-up with Sasha, DJ Heaven, Jazzy M, LTJ Bukem, Blame and MC Conrad. 14 Nov, 10.30pm-3am, £15, mems £10. Midland Street (0141-221 4001)

LEICESTER
ACCESS ALL AREAS AT THE FLAMING COLOSSUS Featuring Carl Cox. 20 Nov, 10pm-3am, £8, mems £7. Welford Street (0116-233 4788)

MUSIC
POP, JAZZ, WORLD ETC

ABERDEEN
IDLEWILD Youthful Scots quartet doing spiky ideas-heavy punk pop, with their debut full-length album Hope Is Important causing a big stir. Glow 303 Belmont Street (01224-648000) 20 Nov, 8pm. £5

BIRMINGHAM
LIONEL RICHIE Superstar solo performer returns to tour Europe for the first time since 1987. 17 Nov, 7pm (0990-232000). £25-£40

THE LIGHTHOUSE FAMILY, KAREN RAMIREZ British pop soul duo, now with a string of hits under their belt. National Exhibition Centre (0121-780 4133) 19 & 20 Nov, 8pm. £19.

EDINBURGH
SEBADOH New sounds from Lou Barlow's American lo-fi heroes. The Attic The Cowgate (0131-225 8382) 15 Nov, 8pm. £7

GLASGOW
BLONDIE Deborah Harry revives the ultimate American new wave disco-popsters. Barrowland Gallowgate (0141-552 4601 cc 226 4679) 19 Nov, 7.30pm, phone for prices.

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION, SOUL COUGHING ADF's latest album Rafi's Revenge was Mercury nominated. Queen Margaret Union University Gardens (0141-339 9784) 16 Nov, 8pm, phone for prices.

HULL
JEAN TOUSSAINT BAND Swinging Caribbean jazz saxophonist featuring pianist Jason Rebello. Dee Street Club Hessle Road (01482-402868) 18 Nov, 8.30pm, £8, concs £6.

LEEDS
REEF, SYMPOSIUM, NOJAHODA Cornish riffing alt-rock big-sellers tour to fine-tune material for their forthcoming third album. Town & Country Club Cookridge Street (0113-280 0100) 15 Nov, 8pm, £11

LIVERPOOL
TOM JONES The charismatic Welsh megastar continues to wow the ladies. Liverpool Empire Lime Street (0151-709 1555) 18 Nov, 8pm, £21-£23

WELLINGBOROUGH
DICK PEARCE DUARTET Highly regarded neobop jazz and funk trumpeter. The Castle Castle Way (01933-270007) 19 Nov, 8pm, £5, concs £3.50

EVENTS

KING'S LYNN
WINTER WONDERLAND Light show with 75,000 bulbs in various colours and designs. Kyng's Lynn Speedway Stadium Saddlebow Road (01553-771111) Ends 1 Jan 4.30pm-9.30pm, £4, OAP £3, child (5-14) £2, family £10 (2 adults 2 children), under 5's free

SHEFFIELD
DISNEY ON ICE - THE SPIRIT OF POCAHONTAS Spectacular adaptation of the Disney film. Sheffield Arena Broughton Lane (0114-256 5656) 17-22 Nov, phone for details.

RADIO

SUNDAY

CHOICE

THE ANNUAL miracle of the swallow's arrival is explored in South for Winter, Home for Spring (12noon R4). Biologists and bird watchers are among the people contemplating the mystery of how such tiny birds (above) navigate this amazing 12,000-mile journey.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Kevin Greening. 10.00 Mark Goodie. 1.00 Emma B. 3.00 Top of the Pops. 4.00 The Official UK Top 40. 7.00 Radio 1's Dance Anthems with Dave Pearce. 10.00 Trevor Nelson. 12.00 Charlie Jordan. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 7.00 Don Maclean. 9.05 Steve Wright. 11.00 David Aaronovitch. 1.00 Desmond Carrington. 3.00 Frank Sinatra: the Voice of the Century. 4.00 Cliff Michelmore. 4.30 Sing Something Simple. 5.00 Pam Ayres. 7.00 Hugh Scully. 8.30 Sunday Half Hour. 9.00 Alan Keith. 10.00 Malcolm Laycock. 11.00 The David Jacobs Collection. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Brian Kay's Sunday Morning. 11.00 Artist of the Week Encore. 12.15 Music Matters. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.45 Karajan Conducts Johann Strauss. 3.00 Spirit of the Age. 4.00 100 Great Singers. 4.15 Centurions. 4.30 The Year. 5.45 Sunday Feature: Pizarro and the United Irishmen. 6.30 Private Passions. 7.30 Sunday Play: Major Barbara. 10.00 Choir Works. 11.30 World Music. 12.00 BBC Symphony Orchestra. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 News Briefing. 6.05 Something Understood. 6.35 On Your Farm. 6.57 Weather. 7.00 News. 7.05 Sunday Papers. 7.10 Sunday. 7.55 Radio 4 Appeal. 8.00 News. 8.05 News; Sunday Papers. 8.07 Sunday Worship. 8.45 Letter from America. 9.00 News; Broadcasting House. 10.00 The Archers. 11.15 Desert Island Discs. 12.00 News; South for Winter, Home for Spring. 12.30 The Motion Show. 12.58 Weather. 1.00 The World This Weekend. 1.30 Round Britain Quiz. 2.00 Gardeners' Question Time. 2.30 Free Spirits. 3.00 The Classic Serial: Hemlock and After. 4.00 News; Open Book. 4.30 Michael Ondaatje in Conversation. 5.00 News; File on 4. 5.40 Feedback. 5.54 Shipping Forecast. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.15 Pick of the Week. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Room for Improvement. 8.00 Colvil and Soames: Bad Apples. 8.30 Law in Action. 9.00 News; The Legacy of Wealth. 9.30 Analysis. 10.00 News; Westminster Hour. 11.00 News; Brain of Britain 1998. 11.30 Something Understood. 12.00 News. 12.15 Experimental Feature: Department S. 12.30 Late Story: Archaeology. 12.48 Shipping. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping. 5.40 Inshore. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 12.00 - 12.04 News; Shipping Forecast.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Brief Lives. 6.30 Andrew Neil. 8.00 SportsWeek. 10.00 Hayes on Sunday. 12.00 Two's Company. 12.30 Media Show. 1.00 Sunday Sport. 6.00 Scottish Premier League. 8.00 News Extra. 8.30 Brief Lives. 9.00 Dallyn Worldwide. 9.30 Out This Week. 10.00 Late Night Currie. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 The Way We Are. 1.45 Transplantations. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Meridian (Feature). 3.00 World News. 3.05 Write On. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 The Works. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

MONDAY

CHOICE

IT'S A KIND of wild justice, it's best served cold, and success is the best sort in Revenge! (3.30pm R4). Ian Peacock explores the world of getting even. His investigation ranges from Jacobean drama to author Cathy Lette (above) putting decomposing prawns in her husband's curtain rails.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 Lamacq Live with Mary Anne Hobbs. 12.00 The Breezeblock. 2.00 Clive Warren. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Humphrey Lyttelton. 8.00 Big Band Special. 8.30 Up s Lazy River with George Melly. 9.30 The Rock 'n' Roll Years. 10.30 Nicky Horne. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Johannes Brahms. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.05 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Opera in Action. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. More from the London Symphony Orchestra's Shostakovich retrospective. 9.35 Postscript. 10.00 Voices. 10.45 Mixing It. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Claude Debussy. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 News; Start the Week. 9.45 Serial: Alistair Cooke - a Celebration. 10.00 News; Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; East End Law. 11.30 Nemesis. 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Round Britain Quiz. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 News; Afternoon Play: Life's Little Ironies - an Imaginative Woman. 3.00 Money Box Live: 0171 580 4444. 3.30 Revenge!. 3.45 Revenge!. 4.00 News; The Food Programme. 4.30 Turning World. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 The Motion Show. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. 7.45 Still Waters. 8.00 News; Managing Life. 8.30 Analysis. Frances Cairncross examines the role and power of the multinational in today's economy. 9.00 News; Nature: Bees in the Desert. 9.30 Start the Week. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Le Grand Meaulnes. 11.00 Radio 4 Appeal. 11.02 Kailyard Blues. 11.30 Aerial Views. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: A Man in Full. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 Family Affairs. 8.00 Trevor Brooking's Monday Match. 10.00 Late Night Live. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Seven Days. 1.45 Wood, Guts and Brass. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 On Screen. 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 The Idea of the City. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

TUESDAY

CHOICE

THE THIRD OF Tim Parks's enlightening interval talks, Adultery and Other Diversions (8.20pm R4), deals with ghosts (above) and why we see them – Parks takes his cue from the post-mortem reappearance of his father, a devout sceptic where phantoms were concerned.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 The Evening Session. 16.00 Digital Update. 10.10 John Peel. 12.00 The Breezeblock. 2.00 Clive Warren. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Kiri's Classical World. 8.00 Nigel Ogden. 9.00 Right Monkey. 16.00 Cole Porter: Night and Day. 10.30 Nicky Horne. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Brahms. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Voices. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.45 Performance on 3. Live from the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, continuing a season of chamber recitals. Tonight, two virtuosos come together to make a sensational duo. Roscoe and Donohoe perform an all-Russian programme full of exoticism, glitter, melody and panache. 8.20 Adultery and Other Diversions. 8.40 Concert, part 2. 9.40 Postscript. 10.05 BBC Symphony Orchestra. 10.45 Night Waves. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Debussy. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 News; The Choice. 9.30 First Nights. 9.45 Serial: Alistair Cooke - a Celebration. 10.00 News; Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; Nature: Bees in the Desert. 11.30 Wonderland Girls. 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Quote... Unquote. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 The Wrong Side of the River. 3.00 News; The Exchange: 0171 580 4444. 3.30 Revenge!. 3.45 Revenge!. 4.00 News; A Good Read. 4.30 Shop Talk. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Radio Shuttleworth. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. Mark Lawson chairs the nightly arts programme. 7.45 Still Waters. 8.00 News; File on 4. 8.40 In Touch. 9.00 News; Case Notes. 9.30 The Choice. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Le Grand Meaulnes. 11.00 The Now Show. 11.30 Talking Pictures. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: A Man in Full. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 The Tuesday Match. 10.00 Late Night Live. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Discovery. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Meridian (Live). 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 One Planet. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

WEDNESDAY

CHOICE

ANOTHER series of a programme which is always tamer than it promises. In Wildbrain (1.30pm R4, right) contestants have to identify wildlife noises, show off their knowledge of breeding habits and identify wildlife-related quotations, as they battle to see who is the best naturalist in the country.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 The Evening Session. 16.00 Movie Update with Mark Kermode. 10.10 John Peel. 12.00 Gilles Peterson. 2.00 Clive Warren. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Nick Barraclough. 8.00 Mike Harding. 9.00 All Singing, All Dancing, All Night. 16.00 Radio 2 Classic Albums. 10.30 Nicky Horne. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 2.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Brahms. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Choral Evensong. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. Live from the Royal Festival Hall, in the presence of Prince Edward. Joan Rodgers (soprano), BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Mark Wigglesworth. Tippett: The Rose Lake. Strauss: Four Last Songs. 8.30 Book of the Month. 8.50 Concert, part 2. 9.35 Postscript. 16.00 Ensemble. 10.45 Night Waves. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Debussy. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 News; Midweek. 9.45 Serial: Alistair Cooke - a Celebration. 10.00 News; Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; Live Luggage. 11.30 Funny Bones. 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Wildbrain. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 The Wrong Side of the River. 3.00 News; Gardeners' Question Time. 3.30 Revenge!. 3.45 Revenge!. 4.00 News; Case Notes. 4.30 Thinking Allowed. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Rainer Hersch's All Classical Music Explained. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. 7.45 Still Waters. 8.00 News; The Moral Maze. Michael Buerk chairs a debate on the moral issues behind one of the week's headlines. 9.00 News; Costing the Earth. 9.30 Midweek. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Le Grand Meaulnes. 11.00 Five Squeezy Pieces. 11.30 Radio Shuttleworth. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: A Man in Full. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 9.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 John Inverdale's Football Night. 16.00 Littlejohn. 11.00 Late Night Live. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Omnibus. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Meridian (Books). 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 Brain of Britain. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

THURSDAY

CHOICE

DEPRESSINGLY topical, Pop! (8pm R4) is a trilogy about the human capacity for dectruction. Bridget Rosewell (above) looks at things, from the South Sea Bubble to the Wall Street Crash and through to our own times, with the craze for Teletubbies and stockmarkets going up and down like yo-yos.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Dave Pearce. 9.00 The Evening Session. 16.00 Trade Update. 10.10 John Peel. 12.00 Andy Kershaw. 2.00 Clive Warren. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker. 7.00 Children in Need: Steve Wright. 8.30 Bob Harris and Alan Freeman. 10.30 Johnnie Walker. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Brahms. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Ensemble. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. More from the London Symphony Orchestra's Shostakovich retrospective, conducted by the composer's friend Mstislav Rostropovich. 9.10 Postscript. 9.35 Chopin. 16.00 Music Restored. 10.45 Night Waves. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Debussy. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 6.00 News; In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. 9.30 Shorelines. 9.45 Serial: Alistair Cooke - a Celebration. 10.00 News, Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; Crossing Continents. 11.30 Colvil and Soames: Bad Apples. 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Brain of Britain 1998. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 The Wrong Side of the River. 3.00 News; Call You and Yours: 0171 580 4444. 3.30 Revenge!. 3.45 Revenge!. 4.00 News; Law in Action. 4.30 The Material World. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Kate and Cindy. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. 7.45 Still Waters. 8.00 News; Pop!. Economist Bridget Rosewell presents a three-part history of bubbles, booms and crashes. 8.30 The Week in Westminster. 9.00 News; Leading Edge. 9.30 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Le Grand Meaulnes. 11.00 The Cradleys. 11.15 MacLean: the Memorex Years. 11.30 Your Place or Mine?. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: A Man in Full. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service. 12.00 - 12.04 News; Shipping. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast. 11.30 Today in Parliament. 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 Time of My Life. 8.00 Inside Edge. 9.00 Hoops. 9.30 Sportshop. 16.00 Late Night Live. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Composer of the Month. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 Focus on Faith. 3.00 World News. 3.05 World Business Report. 3.15 Sports Roundup. 3.30 Assignment. 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

FRIDAY

CHOICE

TONIGHT'S PLAY is an adaptation by William Boyd (right) of his Waugh-like satire on Hollywood, The Destiny of Nathalie X (9pm R4). Maynard Eziashi plays the African film-maker moving through Hollywood. John Sessions does his Peter Sellers bit, playing multiple Tinseltown characters.

Radio 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM) 6.30 Zoe Ball. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening. 2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Chris Moyles. 5.45 Newsbeat. 6.00 Pete Tong's Essential Selection. 9.00 Judge Jules. 11.00 Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. 2.00 Fabio and Grooverider. 4.00 - 7.00 Emma B.
Radio 2
(88-90.2MHz FM) 6.00 Sarah Kennedy. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Richard Allinson. 12.00 John Inverdale. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Des Lynam. 7.00 Hubert Gregg. 7.30 Friday Night Is Music Night. 9.15 Wuthering Heights. 9.30 Listen to the Band. 10.00 David Jacobs. 10.30 Sheridan Morley. 12.00 Lynn Parsons. 4.00 - 6.00 Jackie Bird.
Radio 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM) 6.00 On Air. 9.00 Masterworks. 10.30 Artist of the Week. 11.00 Sound Stories. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Brahms. 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. 2.00 The BBC Orchestras. 4.00 Music Restored. 4.45 Music Machine. 5.00 In Tune. 7.30 Performance on 3. Conductor Tadaaki Otaka. Satie. Stravinsky: Symphonies of Wind Instruments. Per Norgard: Bach to the Future. 8.10 A Sound Read. 8.30 Concert, part 2. 9.20 Postscript. 9.45 Leroy Anderson. 16.00 Hear and Now. 11.30 Punk Jazz. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Debussy. 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.
Radio 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM) 6.00 Today. 9.00 News, Desert Island Discs. 9.45 Serial: Alistair Cooke - a Celebration. 10.00 News; Woman's Hour. 11.00 News; The Great White Sleuth. 11.30 Girlies. 12.00 News; You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Screen Test. 2.00 News; The Archers. 2.15 Afternoon Play: Mrs Shakespeare. 3.00 News, Making History. 3.30 Revenge!. 3.45 Feedback. 4.00 News; Open Book. 4.30 The Message. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 True Lies. 7.00 News; The Archers. 7.15 Front Row. 7.45 Still Waters. 8.00 News; Any Questions?. 8.45 Letter from America. 9.00 News; The Friday Play: The Destiny of Nathalie X. William Boyd's ironic take on Hollywood tells the story of African film-maker Aurelien No's attempt to remake his prize-winning student film. With John Sessions. 10.00 The World Tonight. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Le Grand Meaulnes. 11.00 Late Tackle. 11.30 Notes from the Ditch. 12.00 News. 12.30 The Late Book: A Man in Full. 12.48 Shipping. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 Leisure Update. 5.56 - 6.00 Weather.
Radio 4 LW
(198kHz) 9.45 - 10.00 An Act of Worship. 12.00 - 12.04 News; Shipping. 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping. 11.30 Today in Parliament. 12.00 - 7.00 Test Match Special.
Radio 5 Live
(693, 909kHz MW) 6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 Nicky Campbell. 12.00 The Midday News. 1.00 Ruscoe and Co. 4.00 Drive. 7.00 News Extra. 7.30 Alan Green's Sportsnight. 10.00 Late Night Live. 1.00 Up All Night. 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.
World Service Radio
(198kHz LW) 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 To Be Continued. 1.45 Poems by Post. 2.00 Newsday. 2.30 People and Politics. 3.00 World News. 3.05 Business. 3.15 Sport. 3.30 Science. 4.00 Newsdesk. 4.30 Weekend. 5.00 Newsday. 5.30 Outlook. 5.55 - 6.00 Spotlight

THURSDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (17426). **7.00** News (T) (87600). **9.00** Kilroy (S)(T) (8487155). **9.40** Style Challenge (S) (9393906). **10.05** City Hospital (S)(T) (9437819). **10.55** News (T) (9280703). **11.00** Real Rooms (S) (9290180). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (S)(T) (9200567). **11.55** News (T) (9662762). **12.00** Pass the Buck (S) (4838277). **12.25** Going for a Song (S) (4744884). **12.50** Weather Show (S)(T) (16516136). **1.00** News (T) (60987). **1.30** News (73260838). **1.40** Neighbours (T) (67709155). **2.05** Ironside (9032345). **2.55** Wipeout (S) (2232838).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6981722). **3.45** Fireman Sam (R) (8474616). **3.55** Rugrats (R)(S)(T) (2319616). **4.20** Mr Wymi (S)(T) (4550971). **4.35** Smart (7764635). **5.00** Newsround (S)(T) (4495345). **5.10** Byker Grove (5637242).

5.35 Neighbours (S)(T) (146141).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (703).

6.30 Regional News (T) (155).

7.00 Watchdog (S)(T) (1345).

7.30 EastEnders (S)(T) (567).

8.00 Animal Hospital (S)(T) (4203).

8.30 The Zoo Keepers (S)(T) (6600).

9.00 News; Weather (T) (9722).

9.30 Dinnerladies. Victoria Wood's new comedy continues as the canteen workers prepare for a royal visit by the Duke of Danby (S)(T) (29513).

10.00 They Think It's All Over. Comedy sports quiz (S)(T) (87093).

10.30 Clive Anderson All Talk (90513).

11.00 Question Time (S)(T) (403613).

12.05 FILM **She Says She's Innocent** (1991). Katey Sagal can't believe her daughter could be involved in a killing (S)(T) (4767575).

1.35 Joins BBC News 24 (73579198). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 Cosmic Recycling (3994242). **6.35** Cutting Edge of Progress (9869345). **7.00** Garden Fairies (5615616). **7.05** Teletubbies (2426258). **7.30** Tom and Jerry Kids (2155797). **7.55** Blue Peter (5520987). **8.20** Robinson Sucroe (9113432). **8.45** Just So Stories (6835838). **8.55** Garden Fairies (5324109). **9.00** Job Bank (S) (7352884). **9.10** Belief File (5810258). **9.30** Watch (8477277). **9.45** Come Outside (8465432). **10.00** Teletubbies (46819). **10.30** Storytime (3003258). **10.45** The Experimenter (9763797). **11.05** Space Ark (9470277). **11.15** Zig Zag (9624155). **11.35** Lifeschool (1150987). **12.00** Job Bank (3656838). **12.10** English File (3021432). **12.30** Working Lunch (10619). **1.00** Just So Stories (98183093). **1.10** Sophie Grigson's Herbs (S) (43090093). **1.15** History Hour (R)(S) (135884). **2.15** Match of Their Day (70719161). **2.40** News (7051258). **2.45** Westminster (5890155). **3.25** News (7747635). **3.30** Gardeners' World (R)(S)(T) (161). **4.00** Change That (T) (3458068). **4.25** Ready, Steady, Cook (3451155). **4.55** Lowri (5399529). **5.30** Today's the Day (432).

6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. Sci-fi drama series (S)(T) (550432).

6.45 Sliders. Sci-fi series (S)(T) (866890).

7.30 First Sight (109).

8.00 Edge of Blue Heaven. Benedict Allen ends his Mongolian trek (S)(T) (8635).

8.30 Top Gear (S)(T) (4242).

9.00 Third Rock from the Sun. Alien sitcom (S)(T) (684548).

9.25 CHOICE **Science at War.** Documentary which traces the horrifying development of biological warfare. See *Choice*, below (S)(T) (435971).

10.15 Vintners' Tales with Jancis Robinson (S)(T) (870703).

10.30 Newsnight (T) (102155). **11.15** Late Review (S) (890548). **12.00** Despatch Box (S) (26339). **12.30** Learning Zone (18392556). To 6.10am.

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (9907587). **9.25** Trisha (S)(T) (4274654). **10.15** This Morning (T) (304987). **12.15** Granada News (T) (3559971). **12.30** News (T) (45695). **1.00** Home and Away (T) (39770567). **1.25** The Jerry Springer Show (S)(T) (7037109). **2.10** Emmerdale (R)(S)(T) (39142648). **2.40** Dale's Supermarket Sweep (S)(T) (2221722). **3.10** News Headlines (T) (2754345).

3.20 Children's ITV: Wizadora (R) (7653242). **3.30** Kipper (S) (7044426). **3.45** The Adventures of Paddington Bear (S) (8396884). **3.55** Cow and Chicken (2313432). **4.15** Hey Arnold! (S)(T) (9186345). **4.40** Worst Witch (T) (9059093). **5.10** Home and Away (S)(T) (4621548). **5.40** News (T) (388068).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5574451).

7.00 Emmerdale. Roy sets off on a mission of vengeance (S)(T) (3513).

7.30 We Can Work It Out. Consumer magazine show (635).

8.00 Michael Barrymore's Strike It Rich. Game show. (S)(T) (5161).

8.30 Police, Camera, Action! Alastair Stewart takes us on a hair-raising ride to demonstrate just how reckless drivers can be on the roads (S)(T) (8068).

9.00 Picking up the Pieces. Bill and Caroline are both to be interviewed for the job of ambulance station boss. He's in first and, while he's there, Caroline gets a chance to shine (S)(T) (7093).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (72161).

10.30 Granada News (T) (870906).

10.40 Master Class (730548). **11.10** Granada Classic Matches (539880). **12.10** Barmy Army Game Show (7363339). **12.40** Highlander (R) (2977117). **1.35** Pirate TV (5231020). **2.05** ITV at the Fleadh (9719223). **3.00** Box Office America (R) (52677285). **3.25** Haunted Fishtank (52689020). **3.50** Motor Sport (30343001). **4.15** ITV Nightscreen (1314240). **5.30** Morning News (14594). To 6am.

Channel 4

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (83838). **9.00** Channel 4 Schools (205155). **11.30** Powerhouse (T) (7797). **12.00** Sesame Street (79074). **12.30** I Dream of Jeannie (R)(T) (45677). **1.00** Judge Joe Brown (T) (80797). **1.30** Holiday Romance (R) (67809109).

1.55 FILM **Siege at Red River** (1954). Van Johnson stars as a Confederate agent in this Civil War drama (T) (94509703).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (529). **4.00** Fifteen to One (T) (364). **4.30** Countdown (S)(T) (7758074). **4.55** Ricki Lake (S)(T) (5211797).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow (T) (600).

6.00 Roseanne (R)(T) (513).

6.30 Hollyoaks (T) (203).

7.00 News; Weather (S)(T) (214068).

7.50 Talking Heads (T) (503548).

8.00 The Italian Kitchen (3703).

8.30 Personal Services. A look at the work of Veronica Doyle, who for 40 years has cared for other people's babies (T) (2838).

9.00 The Body Story. Journey round the human body continues with the story of what happens when a 25-year-old singer comes into contact with the common flu virus (T) (2432).

9.30 Dispatches. Current affairs (T) (18451).

10.00 FILM **Dream Lover** (1994). Architect James Spader suspects his wife Madchen Amick of mischief (6684).

12.00 Dispatches Discussion (T) (5626198). **12.45** For the Love of Faith (932556). **1.45** Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (R)(T) (74928*3). **2.35** The Twilight Zone (2578556).

2.55 FILM **Waati** (1995). Powerful portrait of post-Apartheid Africa. (87868914).

5.25 Right to Reply (R)(T) (3291038). **5.55** Sesame Street (S) (3906407). To 7am.

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (2700432). **7.00** WideWorld (R)(S)(T) (6473109). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (6214221). **7.35** Wimzie's House (R)(S) (1987345). **8.00** Havakazoo (R)(S) (2870987). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (2879258). **9.00** The Antiques Hunter (R)(S)(T) (2893838). **9.30** Russell Grant's Postcards (R) (5969068). **9.35** Oprah (7400744) **10.20** Sunset Beach (S)(T) (2303451). **11.10** Leeza (R)(S) (9325616). **12.00** 5 News at Noon (S)(T) (2873074). **12.30** Family Affairs (S)(T) (7631242). **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (6465180). **1.30** Sons and Daughters (7630513). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (5955426). **2.30** Good Afternoon (S) (6440109).

3.30 FILM **Deadly Encounter** (1972). Larry Hagman took a day off from *Dallas* to shoot this high-speed helicopter chase tele-movie (T) (9454187).

5.20 The Roseanne Show (8291267).

6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5526890).

6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5444212).

7.00 5 News (S)(T) (5959242).

7.30 Wild World. Wildlife documentary which looks at the monkey sanctuary in Cornwall (S)(T) (5440426).

8.00 Wing and a Prayer. Courtroom drama series. Arlington and Yasmin now take on a sensitive case (R) (9371890).

9.00 FILM **Desperado: Badlands Justice** (1989). Continuing the adventures of frontier-loner Alex McArthur. It's a gold mine saga, based on a story by Elmore Leonard. With James Sikking (T) (81290093).

10.50 Sex and Shopping. Series offering all – and possibly more – than anybody could want to know about the world-wide porn trade. (S) (7687141).

11.25 The Jack Docherty Show (S) (8909258). **12.00** Live and Dangerous (S) (2516391). **12.40** Live and Dangerous (S) (85408391). **4.40** Prisoner: Cell Block H (2752933). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R)(T) (1603914). To 6am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia [illegible]

Border [illegible]

Central [illegible]

Grampian [illegible]

HTV Wales [illegible]

RTE1 [illegible]

Network 2 [illegible]

Scottish [illegible]

Ulster TV [illegible]

Yorkshire [illegible]

Tyne Tees [illegible]

THURSDAY CHOICE

THE SECOND part of Science at War (9.25pm BBC2, *left*), covers the use of biological weapons. This grim way of waging war was first developed 60 years ago by the Japanese based in Pingfan, northern China. Top scientists under Major Shiro Ishii shockingly tried out their experiments on thousands of Chinese prisoners. But the horror does not end there. After defeating the Japanese in 1945, the Americans gave the imprisoned scientists immunity in exchange for their biological warfare secrets. Realpolitik at its most cynical.

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier [illegible]

Sky MovieMax [illegible]

Sky Cinema [illegible]

FilmFour [illegible]

Sky One [illegible]

Sky Sports 1 [illegible]

Sky Sports 2 [illegible]

Sky Sports 3 [illegible]

UK Gold [illegible]

Paramount Comedy Channel [illegible]

FRIDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (77575). **7.00** News (T) (47759). **9.00** Kilroy (S)(T) (8454827). **9.40** Style Challenge (S) (9297778). **10.05** City Hospital (S)(T) (4329662). **10.50** Children in Need - the Changing Rooms Challenge (S)(T) (9185204). **10.55** News (T) (9184575). **11.00** Real Rooms (S) (9194952). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (S)(T) (9104339). **11.55** News (T) (8911074). **12.00** Pass the Buck (S) (4732049). **12.25** Going for a Song (S) (4711556). **12.50** The Weather Show (S)(T) (85865448). **1.00** News (T) (40846). **1.30** Regional News (7315731). **1.40** Neighbours (S)(T) (87776827). **2.05** Children in Need (S)(T) (17643440). **2.25** Ironside (R) (9949681). **3.15** The Weather Show (S)(T) (2655020).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (R)(S) (6885594). **3.45** Bananaman (R) (8387136). **3.50** The All-New Popeye Show (R)(T) (3441778). **3.55** Dear Mr Barker (S) (7038865). **4.10** Ace Ventura: Pet Detective (S)(T) (9098778). **4.35** Record Breakers (S)(T) (7668407). **5.00** Newsround (S)(T) (4399117). **5.10** Blue Peter (S)(T) (5604914).

5.35 Neighbours (S)(T) (672488).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (223).

6.30 Regional News (T) (575).

7.00 Children in Need. Chequebooks and credit cards at the ready as Terry Wogan and Gaby Roslin launch another round of the annual fund-raising marathon. The Spice Girls get the evening off to a flying start with their new single, confusingly titled *Goodbye* (S)(T) (8391).

7.30 Children in Need. Local (696049).

7.40 Children in Need. More fund-raising fun (S) (878285).

9.00 News; Weather (T) (4310).

9.30 Children in Need. Terry and Gaby return with the second stage of the fund-raising marathon (S)(T) (69763778).

11.35 Children in Need (362914). **12.00** Children in Need (261976). **1.55** Joins BBC News 24 (38354711). To 7am.

BBC2

6.35 Jets and Black Holes (T) (9763117). **7.00** Hairy Jeremy (R)(S) (5519488). **7.05** Teletubbies (S) (2313730). **7.30** Tom and Jerry Kids (S) (2122469). **7.55** Smart (S)(T) (5424759). **8.20** Robinson Sucroe (9017204). **8.45** Johnson and Friends (6722310). **8.55** Hairy Jeremy (R)(S) (5211681). **9.00** Storytime (S) (7329556). **9.10** See You, See Me (5707730). **9.30** Watch (S) (8371049). **9.45** Come Outside (S) (8369204). **10.00** Teletubbies (S) (93440). **10.30** Megamaths (9740846). **10.50** Look and Read (S) (9753310). **11.10** Landmarks (S)(T) (9692556). **11.30** English File (S) (3907). **12.00** Testament (S)(T) (48827). **12.30** Working Lunch (67440). **1.00** Johnson and Friends (S) (96087865). **1.10** Sophie Grigson's Herbs (S) (43994865). **1.15** The History Hour (R)(S) (679575). **2.15** The Art (S) (50288730). **2.20** Racing from Ascot (S) (821391). **4.00** Change That (S)(T) (3418440). **4.25** Ready, Steady, Cook (S)(T) (3428827). **4.55** Lowri (5286001).

5.30 Cricket - the Ashes. Test highlights from Brisbane (S)(T) (952).

6.00 The Simpsons (R)(S)(T) (987223).

6.25 Robot Wars (S)(T) (962914).

6.55 Top of the Pops (S)(T) (477372).

7.30 Bookworm (S)(T) (371).

8.00 Wilderness Walks (S)(T) (5681).

8.30 Gardening Neighbours (S)(T) (1488).

9.00 Blackadder Goes Forth. Blackadder decides to feign madness to avoid going over the top (R)(S)(T) (2952).

9.30 Goodness Gracious Me. Asian comedy sketch show (S)(T) (87204).

10.00 Have I Got News for You. Satirical quiz show (S) (49556).

10.30 Newsnight (T) (195469). **11.15** Stella Street (S)(T) (853681). **11.30** Later with Jools Holland (S) (10827). **12.30** Comedy Nation (S) (90860). **1.00** Café 21 (S) (8201605). **1.35** Close. **3.00** Learning Zone (65353). To 5am.

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (9801339). **9.25** Trisha (S)(T) (8579676). **10.15** This Morning (T) (775778). **12.15** Granada News (T) (3526643). **12.30** News (T) (94594). **1.00** Home and Away (S)(T) (39674339). **1.25** Jerry Springer Show (S)(T) (7924681). **2.10** Emmerdale (R)(S)(T) (63447858). **2.40** Shortland Street (S) (2125594). **3.10** News Headlines (T) (2658117).

3.20 Children's ITV: Wizadora (R) (7620914). **3.30** Archibald the Koala (S) (7011198). **3.45** The Adventures of Captain Pugwash (S) (2211020). **4.05** Bernard's Watch (4531846). **4.20** Fun House (S)(T) (3449310). **4.50** Top Ten of Everything (2141643). **5.10** Home and Away (4518020). **5.40** News (T) (624914).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5478223).

7.00 Bruce's Price Is Right. Game show, with Bruce Forsyth (S)(T) (5989).

7.30 Coronation Street. The Street mourns the loss of a favourite son. Ben decides that Zoe is ready to enter the inner sanctum (T) (827).

8.00 The Bill. An old flame poses a tough dilemma for Beech, and he, in turn, poses an equally difficult dilemma for Daly (T) (2827).

9.00 Britain's Most Wanted. Crime appeals programme with reconstructions and features on Britain's most wanted criminals (S)(T) (5391).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (69310).

10.30 Granada News (T) (218489).

10.40 Friday Night's All Wright. Chat show with Ian Wright and guests Caprice, Sheryl Crow, All Saints and faith healer Eileen Drury (S) (222952).

11.30 NWA (26778). **12.00** Funny Girls – Serious Business (20599). **12.30** God's Gift (S)(T) (93402). **1.30** Club@Vision (S) (4147745). **2.15** World Football (14841). **2.45** seaQuest DSV (R)(S) (5892470). **3.40** Trisha (R)(S)(T) (1641112). **4.25** Cybernet (R)(S) (52700518). **4.50** ITV Nightscreen (7140150). **5.30** News (21228). To 6am.

Channel 4

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (30469). **9.00** Channel 4 Schools (756136). **11.30** Here's One I Made Earlier (R)(S)(T) (5285). **12.00** Sesame Street (68223). **12.30** I Dream of Jeannie (R)(T) (82136). **1.00** Judge Joe Brown (T) (5971846).

1.35 CHOICE **An American Guerrilla in the Philippines** (1950). Tyrone Power stars in this noisy wartime action. See *Choice*, below (T) (62909827).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (579). **4.00** Fifteen to One (S)(T) (556). **4.30** Countdown (7652846). **4.55** Ricki Lake (5288469).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow (T) (420).

6.00 TFI Friday (S) (77827).

7.00 News; Weather (S)(T) (489117).

7.55 The Political Slot (942730).

8.00 Garden Doctors. Experts transform a garden for a man who is recovering from meningitis (T) (7049).

8.30 Brookside (T) (6556).

9.00 Friends. Rachel's reaction to Ross's engagement is drastic (T) (7020).

9.30 Streetmate. Davina McCall plays Cupid for single people in Middlesbrough and Newquay (S)(T) (72372).

10.00 Frasier (R)(S)(T) (67952).

10.30 Eurotrash (S)(T) (475117). **11.05** Harry Hill (S)(T) (696223). **11.35** *TFI Friday* (S)(T) (420040).

12.40 FILM **I Like It Like That** (1994). Lauren Vélez has to take control after her shiftless husband is arrested (T) (697402).

2.40 FILM **Kiss Them for Me** (1957). A trio of Navy fliers go on leave in San Francisco. Starring Cary Grant (804315).

4.20 Fugitive Love (92648131). **4.35** Infomercial (15793957). **4.40** Home to Roost (1296570). **5.15** Home to Roost (96957). **5.45** Stunt Dawgs (8785808). To 6am.

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (2604204). **7.00** WideWorld (6360681). **7.30** Milkshake! (7563533). **7.35** Wimzie's House (1881117). **8.00** Havakazoo (2774759). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (2765730). **9.00** Floyd Uncorked (7693198). **9.25** Russell Grant's Postcards (4449594). **9.30** Oprah (1604907). **10.20** Sunset Beach (2207223). **11.10** Leeza (9229488). **12.00** 5 News at Noon (2777846). **12.30** Family Affairs (7608914). **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (6369952). **1.30** Sons and Daughters (7607285). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (5922198). **2.30** Good Afternoon (6337681).

3.30 FILM **Kissing Miranda.** Salesman Larry Poindexter has an affair with his boss' daughter in this romantic comedy (T) (3759399).

5.20 The Roseanne Show (7540579).

6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5420662).

6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5411914).

7.00 5 News (S)(T) (5926914).

7.30 Frostrup on Friday (S) (5417198).

8.00 Fort Boyard. Fast-moving action adventure game show (S)(T) (9275662).

9.00 FILM **Once You Meet a Stranger** (1996). Jacqueline Bisset stars in this reworking of Hitchcock's classic thriller *Strangers on a Train* (S)(T) (79616676).

10.40 The People vs Jerry Sadowitz. Unusual talk show (S) (7356117).

11.10 FILM **American Boyfriends** (1989). Margaret Langrick stars as a Canadian girl in California (7432198).

1.00 FILM **The Road Home** (1989). Adam Horovitz stars as a teenager in this social melodrama. (22291995).

3.05 FILM **Spare the Rod** (1961). Max Bygraves stars as an idealistic teacher in a tough London school (4821624).

4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (2729605). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (S) (1670686). To 6am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia [illegible]

Border [illegible]

Central [illegible]

Grampian [illegible]

HTV Wales [illegible]

RTE1 [illegible]

Network 2 [illegible]

Scottish [illegible]

Ulster TV [illegible]

Yorkshire/Tyne Tees [illegible]

FRIDAY CHOICE

FRITZ LANG'S sturdy war film, An American Guerrilla in the Philippines (1.35pm C4), is based on the real-life deeds of US Navy Lieutenant ID Richardson during the Second World War. A typically heroic Tyrone Power plays the American sailor from a wrecked torpedo boat who helps rally Filipino guerrillas to fight the occupying Japanese. The clumsy title of this movie was later changed to *I Shall Return* after General Douglas MacArthur's famous declaration on losing at Bataan.

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier [illegible]

Sky MovieMax [illegible]

Sky Cinema [illegible]

FilmFour [illegible]

Sky One [illegible]

Sky Sports 1 [illegible]

Sky Sports 2 [illegible]

Sky Sports 3 [illegible]

UK Gold [illegible]

Paramount Comedy Channel [illegible]

هيكل من الاهالي

TUESDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (93456). **7.00** News (T) (63630). **9.00** Kilroy (S)(T) (8516611). **9.40** Style Challenge (S) (9359562). **10.05** City Hospital (S)(T) (9493475). **10.55** News (T) (9253659). **11.00** Real Rooms (S) (9263036). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (S)(T) (9266123). **11.55** News (T) (7567938). **12.00** Pass the Buck (S) (4894833). **12.25** *Going for a Song* (S) (4873340). **12.50** Weather Show (S)(T) (58916712). **1.00** News (T) (73017). **1.30** Regional News (73226494). **1.40** Neighbours (S)(T) (67838611). **2.05** Ironside (R) (9098901). **2.55** Wipeout (R)(S) (2298494).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6954678). **3.45** Bananaman (R)(S)(T) (8449920). **3.50** ChuckleVision (R)(S) (2392949). **4.10** Noah's Island (S)(T) (9150562). **4.35** It'll Never Work (S)(T) (7720291). **5.00** Newsround (S)(T) (4451901). **5.10** Byker Grove (S)(T) (5773098).

5.35 Neighbours (S)(T) (256543).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (291).

6.30 Regional News (T) (543).

7.00 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook. Culinary challenge (S)(T) (8185).

7.30 EastEnders (S)(T) (727).

8.00 Holiday (S)(T) (7833).

8.30 Mysteries with Carol Vorderman. Real-life mystery stories (S)(T) (6340).

9.00 News; Weather (T) (2630).

9.30 FILM Clear and Present Danger (1994). Harrison Ford stars as CIA agent Jack Ryan, stalking the corridors of power and drug barons in this action thriller (S)(T) (36313630).

11.45 The Corrs at the Commonwealth Rock show (S) (981727).

12.20 FILM Let It Ride (1990). Gambler Richard Dreyfuss gets a tip about a sure thing. Racetrack comedy (S) (4892215).

1.50 Joins BBC News 24 (30889741). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 Open University (3325098). **7.00** The Little Polar Bear (5671272). **7.05** Teletubbies (S) (2482814). **7.30** Tom and Jerry Kids (S) (2284253). **7.55** Blue Peter (5586543). **8.20** Robinson Sucroe (9186388). **8.45** Oakie Doke (6891494). **8.55** Little Polar Bear (5380765). **9.00** France 2000 (7481340). **9.10** Working It Out (5876814). **9.30** Clementine (8433833). **9.45** Numbertime (8438388). **10.00** Teletubbies (S) (58949). **10.30** Watch (S) (3069814). **10.45** Science Zone (S) (9692253). **11.05** Space Ark (9436833). **11.15** Megamaths (9753611). **11.35** Watch (7013727). **11.50** History File (S)(T) (7023104). **12.10** Higher Still (S) (3094388). **12.30** Working Lunch (67272). **1.00** Oakie Doke (98156949). **1.10** Sophie Grigson's Herbs (43063949). **1.15** The History Hour (R)(S) (767982). **2.15** Match of Their Day (S) (70782017). **2.40** News (7017814). **2.45** Westminster (S)(T) (5929611). **3.25** News (7703291). **3.30** Gardeners' World (R)(S)(T) (949). **4.00** Change That (R)(S)(T) (3587524). **4.25** Ready, Steady, Cook (S)(T) (3580611). **4.55** Lowri (S)(T) (5355185). **5.30** Today's the Day (S)(T) (920).

6.00 Fresh Prince of Bel Air (649630).

6.20 Heartbreak High (S)(T) (509104).

7.10 The O Zone (R)(S) (749524).

7.30 From the Edge (S)(T) (369).

8.00 University Challenge (S)(T) (5475).

8.30 Delia's How to Cook (S)(T) (4982).

9.00 Back to the Floor. After 20 years behind a desk, a multi-millionaire house builder returns to the dirty end of his business – the building site (S)(T) (3712).

9.30 Modern Times. Profile of two minders assigned to protect the foreign journalists who visit Baghdad (S)(T) (580272).

10.20 Wrappers (S) (704727).

10.30 Newsnight (T) (779524). **11.15** Seinfeld (S)(T) (537185). **11.40** Larry Sanders Show (S)(T) (849727). **12.00** Despatch Box (S) (79031). **12.30** Learning Zone (18421012). To 6.10am.

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (9963123). **9.25** Trisha (S)(T) (1620140). **10.15** This Morning (T) (314369). **12.15** Granada News (T) (3695727). **12.30** News (T) (61098). **1.00** Home and Away (T) (39736123). **1.25** Jerry Springer Show (7093765). **2.10** Coronation Street (R)(T) (36598122). **2.40** Supermarket Sweep (S)(T) (2294678). **3.10** News (2710901).

3.20 Children's ITV: Wizadora (R) (7799098). **3.30** The Singing Kettle (S) (7173962). **3.45** Wolves, Witches and Giants (S) (8425340). **3.55** Zzzap! (S) (2386388). **4.15** Jumanji (T) (9144901). **4.40** Out of Sight (S)(T) (9022949). **5.10** Home and Away (S)(T) (4687104). **5.40** News; Weather (T) (431307).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5547307).

7.00 Emmerdale (S)(T) (3253).

7.30 The Mall (T) (123).

8.00 The Bill. Rawton resolves to find out how a video of a child giving evidence ended up in a sex club (T) (3475).

9.00 Grafters. Joe and Trevor are back in Newcastle to see their grandfather. The old man sinks towards death, but the brothers row on and declare that their working partnership is over (S)(T) (3611).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (39901).

10.30 Granada News (T) (892524).

10.40 CHOICE Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992). Seductive version of the vampire classic, with Gary Oldman as the shape-changing Dracula. With Winona Ryder. See *Choice*, below (S)(T) (45793340).

1.00 The Haunted Fishtank (65429). **1.30** Planet Rock Profiles (S) (37760). **2.00** Motor Sport (74706).

2.30 FILM The Black Rider (1954). Jimmy Hanley tracks down missing agents in this tacky crime yarn (8682321).

3.35 Nationwide Football League Extra (3107383). **4.30** Nightscreen (22654). **5.30** News (74586). To 6am.

Channel 4

6.00 Sesame Street (19494). **7.00** The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (58340). **9.00** Schools (T) (316611). **11.30** Powerhouse (T) (6833). **12.00** Sesame Street (T) (36814). **12.30** I Dream of Jeannie (R)(T) (52340). **1.00** Judge Joe Brown (T) (66727). **1.30** The Three Stooges (T) (43081098).

1.50 FILM The Bride Came C.O.D. (1941). Pilot James Cagney is stuck in the desert with spoilt heiress Bette Davis. The audience is stuck with two top-rank stars mugging their way through a less-than-hilarious script (T) (94557340).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (807). **4.00** Fifteen to One (T) (524). **4.30** Countdown (S)(T) (7714630). **4.55** Ricki Lake (S)(T) (5340253).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow (388).

6.00 Harry Hill (T) (901).

6.30 King of the Hill (R)(S)(T) (253).

7.00 News; Weather (S)(T) (461122).

7.55 Talking Heads (T) (533185).

8.00 Brookside (S)(T) (4253).

8.30 Driven. Motor magazine (S)(T) (9678).

9.00 Cutting Edge. Nine hundred baby boys were born on 14 November, 1948. One was Prince Charles. What happened to the 899 who could never hope to become the king? (T) (1253).

10.00 Young Person's Guide to Becoming a Rock Star. After her splendid bout of naked guitar-playing, Fiona is recruited to the band. Kirsty Wark guests (T) (271272).

10.45 Friends. The gang meets Monica's new boyfriend (R)(T) (382861).

11.15 Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (T) (107543). **12.00** The Bank, the President and the Pearl of Africa (S)(T) (68654). **1.00** Joe Public (R) (1627876). **1.45** Homicide: Life on the Street (R)(S)(T) (849906). **2.45** Witness (T) (6248316). **3.40** The Immortal Zugzwang (R) (30490963). **4.00** Schools (T) (52586). To 6am.

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (2773388). **7.00** WideWorld (R)(S) (6439765). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (6119497). **7.35** What-a-Mess (1943901). **8.00** Havakazoo (R)(S) (2836543). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (2835814). **9.00** The Great Garden Game (R)(S)(T) (7755982). **9.25** Russell Grant's Postcards (4518678). **9.30** Oprah (4755271). **10.20** Sunset Beach (S)(T) (2376307). **11.10** Leeza (R)(S) (9381272). **12.00** 5 News (S)(T) (2839630). **12.30** Family Affairs (S)(T) (7777098). **1.00** Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (6438036). **1.30** Sons and Daughters (7776369). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (5084982). **2.30** Good Afternoon (S) (6406765).

3.30 FILM Resting Place (1986). Army officer John Lithgow has trouble securing a burial plot for a black Vietnam War hero in an all-white Georgia cemetery (6800663).

5.20 The Roseanne Show (8466553).

6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5599746).

6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5580096).

7.00 5 News (S)(T) (5095098).

7.30 Wild World. Wildlife documentary which looks at the plight of the orang-utan in Borneo (S)(T) (5579982).

8.00 Are You Being Cheated? Charlotte Hudson travels to Barnstaple to uncover market traders selling counterfeit goods (S)(T) (5004746).

8.30 What's the Story? (S) (5083253).

9.00 FILM DNA (1997). Sci-fi adventure set in Borneo in which an expedition to excavate some bones of an ancient beast is infiltrated by an evil geneticist (S)(T) (81263949).

10.50 The Jack Docherty Show. Late-night chat (S) (8266611).

11.30 The Streets of San Francisco (R)(T) (3144494). **12.30** Live and Dangerous (S) (58382302). **3.45** Asian Football Show (3923321). **4.40** Prisoner: Cell Block H (2898789). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (1732470). To 6am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia
As Granada except: 12.20 Anglia News ([illegible]) **1.00** Split Second ([illegible]) **1.30** Home and Away ([illegible]) **2.00** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **5.10** Shortland Street ([illegible]) **6.00** Home and Away ([illegible]) **6.25** Anglia News ([illegible]) **7.30** Bygone Days ([illegible]) **10.30** Anglia News ([illegible]) **2.30** Film: Pride of the Bowery ([illegible]) **3.40** Football League Extra ([illegible]) **4.35** Cybernet ([illegible]) **4.50** ITV Nightscreen ([illegible])

Border
As Granada except: 12.20 Whats On ([illegible]) **12.25** Border News ([illegible]) **6.00** Lookaround ([illegible]) **6.30** Birdwatch ([illegible]) **7.30** Nurses ([illegible]) **10.30** Border News ([illegible])

Central
As Granada except: 12.20 Central News ([illegible]) **1.00** Echo Point ([illegible]) **1.30** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **5.10** Home and Away ([illegible]) **5.40** Shortland Street ([illegible]) **6.00** Home and Away ([illegible]) **6.25** Central News ([illegible]) **7.30** Heart of the Country ([illegible]) **10.30** Central News ([illegible]) **4.30** Jobfinder ([illegible]) **5.30** Asian Eye ([illegible])

Grampian
As Granada except: 12.20 Headlines ([illegible]) **12.25** Telefios ([illegible]) **1.00** Coronation Street ([illegible]) **1.30** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **2.10** Home and Away ([illegible]) **5.00** Hope and Gloria ([illegible]) **6.30** North Tonight ([illegible]) **6.55** Telefios ([illegible]) **7.30** Secret Scotland ([illegible]) **10.30** Film: Bram Stoker's Dracula ([illegible]) **12.50** Headlines ([illegible]) **1.00** Planet Rock Profiles ([illegible]) **1.30** Film: Happiest Days of Your Life ([illegible]) **3.00** Scotland Today ([illegible]) **3.30** Square Meals ([illegible]) **4.00** Short Story Cinema ([illegible]) **4.30** Fire Fight ([illegible])

HTV Wales
As Granada except: 12.15 HTV News ([illegible]) **1.00** Shortland Street ([illegible]) **1.30** Home and Away ([illegible]) **2.00** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **5.10** Playing for Time ([illegible]) **6.00** Home and Away ([illegible]) **6.30** Wales Tonight ([illegible]) **7.30** Our Century ([illegible]) **10.30** HTV News ([illegible]) **3.20 - 4.50** As Anglia

RTE1
9.00 Open House ([illegible]) **9.30** Home Movie Nights ([illegible]) **9.40** Rivers of Life ([illegible]) **10.35** News; The Celtics ([illegible]) **11.30** News; In Care of Nature ([illegible]) **12.00** Coronation Street ([illegible]) **12.30** Take the High Road ([illegible]) **1.00** News ([illegible]) **1.25** Home and Away ([illegible]) **1.55** [illegible] **2.55** To Be Announced ([illegible]) **3.00** News; Open House ([illegible]) **5.20** News; [illegible] **5.30** Emmerdale ([illegible]) **6.20** Nuacht ([illegible]) **6.30** Shortland Street ([illegible]) **6.00** The Angelus ([illegible]) **6.01** Six One ([illegible]) **7.00** Fair City ([illegible]) **7.00** [illegible] **8.00** Only Fools and Horses ([illegible]) **8.30** Car in the Ground ([illegible]) **9.00** News ([illegible]) **9.30** Prime Time ([illegible]) **10.10** Would You Believe ([illegible]) **10.40** The Cold War ([illegible]) **11.35** News ([illegible]) **11.40** Film: [illegible] **1.30** George and Leo ([illegible]) **1.55** The [illegible] **2.40** News; World [illegible] **3.30** Pop Profiles ([illegible]) **3.30** Questions and Answers ([illegible]) **4.25** Prime Time ([illegible]) **5.00** Euro News ([illegible])

Network 2
6.45 Den 2 AM ([illegible]) **8.40** Noah's Island ([illegible]) **7.15** Dragon ([illegible]) **7.45** Insects' House ([illegible]) **8.30** [illegible] **9.00** ITV ([illegible]) **9.45** The Morbegs ([illegible]) **10.00** Open Learning ([illegible]) **11.30** Ultrabord Jungle ([illegible]) **11.55** Rand ([illegible]) **12.30** Top 30 Hits ([illegible]) **12.30** Winning Streak ([illegible]) **1.25** Ear to the Ground ([illegible]) **1.55** Batman ([illegible]) **2.00** The Morbegs ([illegible]) **2.15** Den 2 ([illegible]) **2.30** Johnson and Friends ([illegible]) **2.30** Harvey ([illegible]) **3.05** My Men ([illegible]) **3.15** Fun and Jerry Kids ([illegible]) **3.20** Happy Birthday ([illegible]) **3.35** Honford Hippos ([illegible]) **4.05** The Big Bus Doc ([illegible]) **4.30** Man in Black ([illegible]) **4.45** Echo Island ([illegible]) **5.15** Rugrats ([illegible]) **5.30** Breaker High ([illegible]) **6.00** Den 2 Choice ([illegible]) **6.30** Home and Away ([illegible]) **7.00** Undeck ([illegible]) **7.30** Top 30 Hits ([illegible]) **8.30** News; Crazy ([illegible]) **9.00** The X Files ([illegible]) **6.00** Men Behaving Badly ([illegible]) **10.20** Tech TV ([illegible]) **10.50** News 2 ([illegible]) **11.10** Later with John Kelly ([illegible]) **11.55** Oireachtas Report ([illegible]) **12.20** Play ([illegible]) **1.45** Movie Show Interviews ([illegible]) **1.55** No Disco ([illegible]) **2.20** Jobfinder 98 ([illegible])

Scottish
As Granada except: 12.20 Today ([illegible]) **12.25** Telefios ([illegible]) **1.00** Today ([illegible]) **1.30** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **2.10** Home and Away ([illegible]) ([illegible]) **6.00** Hope and Gloria ([illegible]) **6.30** Scotland Today (611) **7.30** Secret Scotland (123) **10.30** Film: Bram Stoker's Dracula ([illegible]) **12.50** Today ([illegible]) **1.00** Planet Rock Profiles (65429) **1.30** Film: The Happiest Days of Your Life ([illegible]) **2.00** North Tonight ([illegible]) **3.30** Square Meals ([illegible]) **4.00** Falcon Crest ([illegible]) **5.00** Emmerdale ([illegible])

Ulster TV
As Granada except: 12.20 UTV News ([illegible]) **12.25** You-TV ([illegible]) **1.00** Coronation Street ([illegible]) **1.30** Home and Away ([illegible]) **2.00** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **4.40** Out of Sight ([illegible]) **5.10** You-TV ([illegible]) **5.40** Home and Away ([illegible]) **6.25** UTV Live Sting ([illegible]) **6.00** UTV Live at Six ([illegible]) **7.30** Jenny's Country Cooking (123) **10.30** UTV News (892524) **10.40** As Others See Us ([illegible]) **11.10** Film: Bram Stoker's Dracula ([illegible])

Yorkshire/Tyne Tees
As Granada except: 12.15 Local News ([illegible]) **5.55** Local ([illegible]) **6.30** Tonight (611) **7.30** Yorkshire: What a Picture; Tyne Tees: Magnetic North (123) **10.30** Local News (892524) **4.30** Jobfinder (22654)

TUESDAY CHOICE

DOES ANYONE do seductive evil better than Gary Oldman? One of our finest exports to Hollywood obviously relishes his role as the 15th-century Count Dracula who is forced to survive on other people's blood for all eternity and is confronted by his old adversary, Van Helsing (Anthony Hopkins) in *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (10.40pm ITV, *left*). Director Francis Ford Coppola invests this new version of an oft-filmed story with a real sense of style, and the film deservedly scooped an Oscar for costume design.

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier
6.00 The Underworld (1997) (42458). **8.00** Magic in the Water (1995) (74272). **10.00** Space Jam (1996) (21494). **12.00** The Underworld (1997) (87123). **2.00** The Christmas Coal Mine Miracle (1977) (33253). **4.00** Magic in the Water (1995) (8340). **6.00** Space Jam (1996) (53017). **8.00** Liar Liar (1997) (68582). **10.00** Ransom (1996) (83609415). **12.05** The Proprietor (1996) (623566). **2.00** Desperate Trail (1994) (411873). **3.35 - 6.00** Mute Witness (1995) (8689012).

Sky MovieMax
6.00 Ebirah – Horror of the Deep (1966) (50920). **7.30** Weekend Reunion (1990) (5485920). **8.35** Shout (1991) (58081765). **11.00** Ebirah – Horror of the Deep (1966) (82369). **1.00** Weekend Reunion (1990) (87982). **3.00** Terror in the White House (1997) (61388). **5.00** Shout (1991) (79543). **7.00** Criminal Intent (1996) (12920). **9.00** Fifteen and Pregnant (1997) (20291). **10.30** Movietalk (75727). **11.00** Death Hunt (1981) (540185). **12.40** Swearing Allegiance (1997) (884470). **2.15** Adam: His Song Continues (1986) (778470). **3.50 - 5.00** Secret Admirer (1985) (8491012).

Sky Cinema
4.00 Cleopatra (1963) (7585765). **4.00** Back to Bataan (1945) (8367253). **10.00** Days of Wine and Roses (1962) (4280862). **12.00** The Pope of Greenwich Village (1984) (3094857). **2.00 - 5.00** Woodstock (1970) (7193074).

FilmFour
6.00 Sanjuro (1962) (2328484). **8.00** Eds Next Move (1996) (2390811). **10.00** Walking and Talking (1996) (142765). **11.30** Wild Search (1989) (980759). **1.30** City on Fire (1987) (7481925). **3.30** Sanjuro (1962) (2853885). **4.45 - 6.00** A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies (7031865).

Sky One
7.00 Simpsons (14388). **7.30** Chris Evans (1561). **8.30** Hollywood Squares (92494). **9.00** Guilty! (84458). **10.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (22307). **11.00** Oprah (68253). **12.00** Chris Evans (1203865). **1.00** Days of Our Lives (8555746). **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (951307). **3.00** Jenny Jones (4307217). **4.00** Guilty! (40123). **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5494). **6.00** Married with Children (8727). **6.30** Dream Team (2307). **7.00** The Simpsons (7123). **7.30** Real TV (1291). **8.00** Speed (8543). **8.30** Coppers (2678). **9.00** Police Stop! (4272). **10.00** Ibiza Uncovered (34659). **11.00** Dream Team (80881). **11.30** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (70253). **12.30** Renegade (7147). **1.30 - 7.00** Long Play (4219825).

Sky Sports 1
7.00 Sky Sports Centre (7159594). **7.15** V-Max (5253340). **7.45** Beach Volleyball (5228181). **8.15** Centre (8360272). **8.30** Racing News (77307). **9.00** Aerobics (88659). **9.30** Football League (47307). **10.30** Table Tennis: Italian Open (11494). **11.30** World Windsurfing (5185). **12.00** Aerobics (7123). **12.30** Football Nottingham Forest vs Derby County (37369). **2.30** Football League (27746). **3.30** Beach Volleyball (2185). **4.00** Showjumping (8272). **5.00** Centre (6369). **6.30** Inside Scottish Football (35765). **7.30** Fastrax (1833). **8.00** Amateur Boxing England vs USA (87098). **10.00** Sky Sports Centre (717348). **10.15** Football Show (116494). **11.15** Scottish Football (112678). **12.15** Centre (2298682). **12.30** Football England U21 v Czech Republic U21 (53079). **2.00** Boxing (89073). **4.00** Centre (80510302). **4.15** Close.

Sky Sports 2
7.00 Aerobics (8606165). **7.30** Sports Centre (567277). **7.45** Racing News (6183036). **8.15** World Windsurfing (4587833). **8.45** Sky Sports Centre (3858307). **9.00** Fish TV Fishing Tales (4990524). **9.30** Fish TV (7743746). **10.00** V-Max (7928165). **10.30** Equestrianism (1826563). **12.30** World Cup of Golf (2675814). **1.30** World Motor Sport (1182982). **5.30** Sports Unlimited (7096765). **6.30** World Cup of Golf (3685851). **7.30** Football England U21 v Czech Republic U21 (5002746). **10.00** Millstreet Showjumping 98 (8995340). **11.00** World Cup of Golf (8315833). **12.00** PGA Golf - Grand Slam of Golf (841425). **4.00** Centre (7053438). **4.15** Close.

Sky Sports 3
12.00 Pool: the Dust 1998 (3880404). **1.00** Fish TV (55488882). **1.30** Fish TV (14404348). **2.00** Heroes (8772528). **3.00** Second Innings (77958524). **3.30** World Windsurfing (52530484). **4.00** Table Tennis (53600239). **6.00** Athletics (77960363). **6.30** Fastrax (52538765). **6.00** Showjumping (86952270). **7.00** Fish TV (77973633). **7.30** Fish TV (5256844). **8.00** Showjumping (2112037). **10.00** Superbouts Boxing (2191524). **11.00** Second Innings (53601920). **11.30** Close.

UK Gold
7.00 Crossroads (7497036). **7.30** Neighbours (8493727). **7.55** EastEnders (33399491). **8.30** The Bill (6608343). **9.00** The Bill (6622900). **9.30** Bergerac (3404630). **10.30** Angels (6625104). **11.00** Dallas (5436104). **11.35** Neighbours (3558425). **12.25** EastEnders (7781746). **1.00** Juliet Bravo (2500088). **2.00** Dallas (7827433). **2.55** The Bill (631123). **3.25** The Bill (6318340). **3.55** Bergerac (691504). **4.55** EastEnders (4316814). **5.30** Angels (3535291). **6.00** Due South (2533582). **7.00** May to December (3844046). **7.40** It Ain't Half Hot, Mum (2683065). **8.20** Dad's Army (9188036). **9.00** Red Dwarf (9162273). **9.40** This Life (771494). **10.30** NYPD Blue (24064681). **11.35** The Bill (3600479). **12.05** The Bill (5988944). **12.25** The Chief (4185708). **1.30** Colin's Sandwich (63399488). **1.55** Film: The Star Packer (1934) (3866147). **2.50 - 7.00** Shopping (97788079).

Paramount Comedy Channel
7.00 Clueless (5307). **7.30** Desmonds (9475). **8.00** Roseanne (1727). **8.30** Just Shoot Me (3562). **9.00** Ellen (6562). **9.30** Seinfeld (85814). **10.00** Frasier (70494). **10.30** Cheers (56814). **11.00** Jack Dee (73307). **11.30** Larry Sanders (35307). **12.00** David Letterman (62468). **1.00** Sledge Hammer (44031). **1.30** The Critic (89079). **2.00** Dr Katz (29383). **2.30** Soap (48418). **3.00** Girls on Top (64895). **3.30** Nightstand (22470). **4.00** Close.

WEDNESDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (60895). **7.00** News (T) (30079). **9.00** Kilroy (8583383). **9.40** Style Challenge (S) (9326234). **10.05** City Hospital (S)(T) (9460147). **10.55** News (T) (9213031). **11.00** Real Rooms (S) (9230708). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (9233895). **11.55** News (T) (5367550). **12.00** Pass the Buck (S) (4861505). **12.25** Going for a Song (S) (4840012). **12.50** Weather Show (S)(T) (8221924). **1.00** News (T) (33166). **1.30** Regional News (73293166). **1.40** Neighbours (67805383). **2.05** Ironside (R) (9065673). **2.55** Wipeout (2265166).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6914050). **3.45** Bananaman (R)(S) (8416692). **3.50** ChuckleVision (2352321). **4.10** *Get Your Own Back* (9127234). **4.35** The Queen's Nose (S)(T) (7797963). **5.00** Newsround (4428673). **5.10** Blue Peter (5733470).

5.35 Neighbours (S)(T) (783944).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (383).

6.30 Regional News (T) (963).

7.00 A Question of Sport (S)(T) (1499).

7.30 Tomorrow's World (S)(T) (147).

8.00 The Life of Birds (S)(T) (664383).

8.50 The National Lottery: Amazing Luck Stories (S)(T) (517160).

9.00 News; Weather (9876).

9.30 CHOICE QED. Story of an archaeological find in the Amazon. See *Choice*, below (S)(T) (49654).

10.00 War and Piste. New ski-slope docu-drama (S) (34234).

10.30 Best of British. A profile of Cliff Richard (S)(T) (215673).

11.15 FILM Carry On Camping (1969). Below par farce. (T) (442895).

12.40 FILM Percy's Progress (1974). Comedy, with Leigh Lawson (695258).

2.20 Joins BBC News 24 (49038548). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 Duccio: The Rucellai Madonna (T) (3090470). **6.35** Caught in Time (T) (9892673). **7.00** King Greenfingers (R)(S) (5648944). **7.05** Teletubbies (2459586). **7.30** Tom and Jerry Kids (S) (2251925). **7.55** To Me... to You (R)(S)(T) (5553215). **8.20** Robinson Sucroe (9146760). **8.45** Juniper Jungle (R)(T) (6868166). **8.55** King Greenfingers (S) (5357437). **9.00** Space Ark (R)(S) (7458012). **9.10** What? Where? When? Why? (S) (7478876). **9.25** Focus (S)(T) (5866437). **9.45** Words and Pictures (S) (8498760). **10.00** Teletubbies (S) (86760). **10.30** Numbertime (S) (3036586). **10.45** Cats' Eyes (302741). **11.00** Around Scotland (S) (9732128). **11.20** Geography Programme (S)(T) (4104031). **11.40** *Science in Action* (S)(T) (7094692). **12.00** Teaching Today (S) (31147). **12.30** Working Lunch (50760). **1.00** Juniper Jungle (R)(S) (9816321). **1.10** Sophie Grigson's Herbs (43023321). **1.15** The History Hour (S) (797321). **2.15** Match of Their Day (S) (70759789). **2.40** News (T) (7084586). **2.45** Westminster (S)(T) (2637128). **3.55** News (3577147). **4.00** Change That (R)(S)(T) (3554296). **4.25** Ready, Steady, Cook (S)(T) (3557383). **4.55** Esther (S)(T) (5322857). **5.30** Today's the Day (S)(T) (352).

6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. Sci-fi drama series (R)(S)(T) (646302).

6.45 Sliders. Sci-fi (S)(T) (234876).

7.30 *Behind Closed Doors* (S)(T) (789).

8.00 Looking Good (S) (8789).

8.30 Home Front (S)(T) (7296).

9.00 Nurse. The students approach the end of their first year of training, but all are having trouble living on their financial allowances (S)(T) (736895).

9.50 Trade Secrets (R)(S)(T) (828418).

10.00 In Stitches. Doctor-patient encounters recreated by Britain's top comedians (R) (32876).

10.30 Newsnight (T) (213215). **11.15** *Brothers and Sisters* (S)(T) (656166). **12.00** Despatch Box (S) (22890). **12.30** Learning Zone (18325884). To 6.10am

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (9930895). **9.25** Trisha (S)(T) (5925352). **10.15** This Morning (T) (860296). **12.15** Granada News (T) (3662499). **12.30** News (T) (54586). **1.00** Home and Away (S)(T) (39703895). **1.25** Jerry Springer Show (S)(T) (7060437). **2.10** Emmerdale (R)(S)(T) (60893334). **2.40** Dale's Supermarket Sweep (S)(T) (2254050). **3.10** News (T) (2787673).

3.20 Children's ITV: Wizadora (R) (7759470). **3.30** The Slow Norris (S) (7140654). **3.45** The Animal Shelf (S) (7178437). **4.00** Rupert (R) (3574050). **4.25** The Rottentrolls (S)(T) (4680166). **4.40** Mad for It (S) (9082321). **5.10** Home and Away (S)(T) (4654876). **5.40** News; Weather (T) (935470).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5514079).

7.00 Emmerdale (S)(T) (9895).

7.30 Coronation Street (T) (215).

8.00 Hornblower. Second feature-length *adventure of the great naval hero played* by Ioan Gruffudd. Here he comes across the legendary, fearsome and wonderfully named Captain Dreadnought Foster, an old adversary of Horatio's mentor Pellew (S)(T) (4437).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (29302).

10.30 Granada News (T) (343505).

10.40 Clive James on TV. The acerbic Aussie, now brings his dry wit to bear on that dinosaur of telly yesteryear, the beauty contest (S) (212895).

11.10 The Big Match: England vs Czech Republic (474499).

12.10 FILM State of Grace (1991). Ferocious New York gangster drama with cop Sean Penn infiltrating the local Mob in the Hells Kitchen of the Seventies. With Ed Harris (64108364).

2.35 The Hopeful Traveller (S) (4939432). **3.00** Trisha (R)(S)(T) (3820242). **3.40** Cybernet (S) (21972242). **4.10** Stash (92706109). **4.20** Nightscreen (3946068). **5.30** News (27345). To 6am.

Channel 4

6.00 Sesame Street (53505). **7.00** The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (23789). **9.00** Channel 4 Schools (T) (867692). **11.30** Powerhouse (T) (3079). **12.00** Sesame Street (26215). **12.30** I Dream of Jeannie (T) (52128). **1.00** Judge Joe Brown (T) (26876). **1.30** Little Bird (59371895).

1.35 FILM Count Your Blessings (1959). Maurice Chevalier makes smug comments while Deborah Kerr rues marriage to philandering French playboy Rossano Brazzi (T) (62038383).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (437). **4.00** Fifteen to One (944). **4.30** Countdown (7781302). **4.55** Ricki Lake (S)(T) (5317925).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow (T) (708).

6.00 Late Lunch with Mel and Sue. Celebrity chat, audience participation and a spot of cooking. With guests Paul Whitehouse and Charlie Higson (60147).

7.00 News; Weather (S)(T) (574031).

7.55 Talking Heads (T) (238596).

8.00 Brookside (S)(T) (3857).

8.30 The Real Holiday Show. Holidaymakers offer their video records of trips to Barbados and Poland (T) (5692).

9.00 Drop the Dead Donkey. Helen finds *she has no secrets, Joy turns out to have* hidden talents and Sally seeks an alternative income (2586).

9.30 Is It Legal? Alison watches Colin handing round home-made biscuits and wonders if he's gay (S)(T) (65692).

10.00 Rising Damp. Sitcom (T) (27944).

10.30 Bob and Margaret. Animated series about a married couple (S)(T) (36692).

11.00 Whose Line Is It Anyway? Improvisation with Clive Anderson, Greg Proops, Colin Mochrie, Ryan Stiles and Karen Maruyama (S)(T) (7031).

11.30 The Comedy Lab (77012). **12.00** Under the Moon (6401884). **5.55** Sesame Street (3002635). To 7am.

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (2733760). **7.00** WideWorld (R)(S) (6406437). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (7777339). **7.35** Wimzie's House (R)(S) (1910673). **8.00** Havakazoo (R)(S) (2803215). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (2802586). **9.00** HouseBusters (R)(S)(T) (7722654). **9.25** Russell Grant's Postcards (R) (4578050). **9.30** Oprah (8050483). **10.20** Sunset Beach (S)(T) (2343079). **11.10** Leeza (R)(S) (9358944). **12.00** 5 News at Noon (S)(T) (2806302). **12.30** Family Affairs (R)(S)(T) (7737470). **1.00** Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (6405708). **1.30** Sons and Daughters (7736741). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (5051654). **2.30** Good Afternoon (S) (6473437).

3.30 FILM Aloha Means Goodbye (4274031).

5.10 The Roseanne Show (5777483).

6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5566418).

6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5540470).

7.00 5 News (S)(T) (5055470).

7.30 The Pepsi Chart. Dr Fox presents the latest sounds from London's Sound Republic (S)(T) (5546654).

8.00 The Car Show. Mariella Frostrup and Tristram Payne with the guru's guide to cars. Mariella tries out the Nissan Micra and Tristram Payne tests the new BMW3 series (5071418).

8.30 In the Dark. Comedy game show with a difference (S)(T) (5050925).

9.00 FILM The Silencers (1995). Black-eyed aliens called Arcadians plan to conquer Earth. Cop Jack Scalia teams with interplanetary lawman Dennis Christopher to sort it out in this noisily violent sci-fi action movie (S)(T) (81214673).

10.55 Melinda's Big Night In. Celebrity chat show (S) (8232654).

11.35 Compromising Situations (S) (6238334). **12.10** NHL Ice Hockey (S) (49753600). **4.40** Club Class (R)(S) (92989364). **5.05** Move On Up (4795180). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (1636242). To 6am.

ITV/Regions

Anglia
As Granada except: 12.20 Anglia News (9992700) **1.00** Split Second (26234) **1.30** Home and Away (53657) **2.00** Jerry Springer (5847091) **5.10** Shortland Street (4654876) **6.00** Home and Away (483055) **6.25** Anglia News (380383) **10.30** Anglia News (343505) **2.35** The Hopeful Traveller (8584819) **3.05** Trisha (3376867) **3.35** Cybernet (3037500) **4.20** Soundtrax ([illegible]) **4.40** ITV Nightscreen (9840815) **5.00** Coronation St (91093)

Border
As Granada except: 12.20 Border Headlines (5918708) **12.25** Border News (5917079) **6.00** Lookaround (509) **6.30** Crown and Country (431) **10.30** Border News and Weather (343505)

Central
As Granada except: 12.20 Central News (9992700) **1.00** Echo Point (26234) **1.30** Jerry Springer (5789654) **2.10** Home and Away (60893334) **5.10** Shortland Street (4654876) **6.00** Home and Away (483055) **6.25** Central News (380383) **10.30** Central News (343505) **4.30** Jobfinder (3940884) **5.20** Asian Eye (3083600)

Grampian
As Granada except: 12.20 Headlines (5918708) **12.25** Telefios (5917079) **1.00** Emmerdale (26234) **1.30** Jerry Springer (5789654) **2.10** Home and Away (60893334) **6.00** We Can Work It Out (509) **6.30** North Tonight (500783) **6.55** Telefios (535091) **10.30** Clive James on TV (38050) **11.00** Northern Agenda (23147) **12.30** Headlines (5108707) **12.40** England vs Czech Republic (4717871) **1.40** Trisha (9342908) **2.40** Cum Is Caro (6576800) **3.30** [illegible] (7566835) **4.40** Echo Point (7171030)

HTV Wales
As Granada except: 12.15 HTV News (3053499) **1.00** Shortland Street (26234) **1.30** Home and Away (53657) **6.00** Jerry Springer (5847091) **5.10** Primetime Diary (4654876) **6.00** Home and Away (483055) **6.25** Wales Tonight (380383) **10.30** HTV News (343505) **2.35 - 5.00** As Anglia

RTE1
9.00 Open House ([illegible]) **9.30** William Faulkner ([illegible]) **10.05** Cuisine Is Mann ([illegible]) **10.35** News; The Colbys ([illegible]) **11.35** News; Barnaby Jones ([illegible]) **12.30** Take the High Road ([illegible]) **1.00** News ([illegible]) **1.25** Home and Away ([illegible]) **1.55** Peak Practice ([illegible]) **2.55** Weekdon ([illegible]) **3.00** News; Open House ([illegible]) **5.20** News; The High Road ([illegible]) **5.30** Emmerdale ([illegible]) **6.20** Nuacht ([illegible]) **6.30** Shortland Street ([illegible]) **6.00** The Angelus ([illegible]) **6.01** Six-One ([illegible]) **7.00** Nationwide ([illegible]) **8.00** Out of the Blue ([illegible]) **8.30** Prime Time ([illegible]) **9.00** News ([illegible]) **9.30** Film: The Net ([illegible]) **11.40** Wings ([illegible]) **12.05** News Headlines ([illegible]) **12.10** Ruth Rendell Mysteries ([illegible]) **2.05** Film: Fire in the Sky ([illegible]) **4.05** To Be Announced ([illegible]) **4.50** Prime Time ([illegible]) **6.00** Euro News ([illegible])

Network 2
6.45 Den 2 AM ([illegible]) **6.45** Farthing Wood ([illegible]) **7.15** Angry Beavers ([illegible]) **7.30** A Pup Named Scooby Doo ([illegible]) **8.20** Hero Turtles ([illegible]) **8.50** ITV ([illegible]) **9.45** The Morbegs ([illegible]) **10.00** Saludos ([illegible]) **10.25** Viva Italiano ([illegible]) **10.40** Now You're Talking ([illegible]) **11.05** Simply Painting ([illegible]) **11.30** Oireachtas Report ([illegible]) **11.55** Gridlock ([illegible]) **12.25** Lovejoy ([illegible]) **1.25** Hands On ([illegible]) **1.50** Credible Edibles ([illegible]) **2.00** The Morbegs ([illegible]) **2.15** Den 2 ([illegible]) **2.50** Enchanted Lands ([illegible]) **3.00** Barney ([illegible]) **3.05** Oscar and Friends ([illegible]) **3.15** Happy Birthday ([illegible]) **3.30** The Queen's Nose ([illegible]) **4.00** Draw with Don ([illegible]) **4.15** Sister Sister ([illegible]) **4.45** Echo Island ([illegible]) **5.15** Rugrats ([illegible]) **5.30** Animaniacs ([illegible]) **6.00** Den 2 Choice ([illegible]) **6.30** Home and Away ([illegible]) **7.00** Pop Sceno ([illegible]) **7.30** Film: Real Genius ([illegible]) **9.25** To Be Announced ([illegible]) **9.30** Sin City ([illegible]) **10.15** The Nanny ([illegible]) **10.45** News 2 ([illegible]) **11.05** Later with Clare McKeon ([illegible]) **11.50** Oireachtas Report ([illegible]) **12.15** Rugby Highlights ([illegible]) **1.15** Melrose Place ([illegible]) **2.05** M O U T H ([illegible]) **2.20** Twisted ([illegible]) **2.45** Great Mysteries and Myths ([illegible]) **3.10** Jobfinder 98 ([illegible])

Scottish
As Granada except: 12.20 Scotland Today ([illegible]) **12.25** Telefios ([illegible]) **1.00** Scotland Today (26234) **1.30** Jerry Springer ([illegible]) **2.10** Home and Away (60893334) **6.00** We Can Work It Out (509) **6.30** Scotland Today (430) **10.30** Clive James on TV (38050) **11.00** Scotland Today (236234) **12.10** The Future of the Highlands ([illegible]) **1.40** Trisha ([illegible]) **2.40** Cum Is Caco ([illegible]) **3.10** Fatle ([illegible]) **3.00** Falcon Crest ([illegible]) **4.30** Emmerdale ([illegible]) **5.00** Coronation Street (91093)

Ulster TV
As Granada except: 10.15 This Morning ([illegible]) **12.20** UTV News ([illegible]) **12.25** You-TV ([illegible]) **1.00** Emmerdale (26234) **1.30** Home and Away (53657) **2.00** The Jerry Springer Show ([illegible]) **5.10** You-TV ([illegible]) **5.40** Home and Away ([illegible]) **6.25** UTV Live Sting ([illegible]) **6.00** UTV Live at Six ([illegible]) **7.30** Coronation Street (215) **7.55** UTV News Update ([illegible]) **10.30** UTV News and Weather (343505)

Yorkshire
As Granada except: 12.15 Calendar News and Weather ([illegible]) **5.55** Calendar ([illegible]) **6.30** Tonight (401) **10.30** Calendar News and Weather (343505) **4.20** Jobfinder (3946068)

Tyne Tees
As Yorkshire except: 12.15 North East News and Weather ([illegible]) **12.25** Jobtalk ([illegible]) **5.55** North East Weather ([illegible]) **6.00** North East Tonight ([illegible]) **10.30** North East News and Weather (343505)

WEDNESDAY CHOICE

TONIGHT'S QED: Secrets of the Cloud People (9.30pm BBC1, *left*) tells the story of arguably the most remarkable archaeological find of the century in the Amazon jungle: a lost civilisation of tall, blond people who lived high in the cloud forest. The 71-year-old explorer Gene Savoy found burial tombs above the sacred "Lake of the Condors" containing the mummified corpses of a tall, non-Inca people, and a monumental structure two and a half times the size of the Great Pyramid of Egypt. Did these people originate in Egypt?

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier
6.00 Apocalypse Watch (1995) (578321). **8.30** A Change of Heart (1997) (28128). **10.30** A Kid in King Arthur's Court (1995) (14586). **12.00** Apocalypse Watch (1995) (25374). **2.30** Abraham (1993) (70286). **4.00** A Change of Heart (1997) (3676). **6.00** A Kid in King Arthur's Court (1995) (16668). **7.30** Film Night (8437). **8.00** Gargantua (1998) (25012). **10.00** The Long Kiss Goodnight (1996) (22457). **12.00** Marial (1996) (715451). **1.35** Avenging Angel (1995) (293203). **3.35 - 6.00** Crime of the Century (1996) (2563645).

Sky MovieMax
6.00 Jane Eyre (1995) (92073). **8.00** Amorel (1996) (22865). **9.30** Take Your Best Shot (1982) (89863). **11.30** Earth Minus Zero (1996) (24302). **1.00** Amorel (1993) (24321). **3.00** Suddenly (1996) (4148). **6.30** Take Your Best Shot (1982) (89708). **7.00** Jane Eyre (1995) (4741). **9.00** Space Truckers (1997) (2574). **11.00** Die Hard (1988) (25854867). **1.10** Adrenalin: Fear the Rush (1995) (4764971). **2.00** Daddy's Dyin'... Who's Got The Will? (1990) (842451). **4.05 - 6.00** Phoenix II (1996) (582584).

Sky Cinema
4.00 Bachelor Knight (1947) (159174). **6.00** The Great Dictator (1940) (8352708). **8.00** The Magnificent Ambersons (1942) (8334925). **10.00** Plaza Suite (1971) (4237654). **12.30** From Noon till Three (1976) (8646971). **1.40** Che! (1969) (4523563). **3.00** Seven Days' Leave (1942) (2383189). **4.50** Terror by Night (1946) (8048093). **5.50** Close.

FilmFour
6.00 A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese (7190302). **7.30** Barry Lyndon (1975) (8291857). **10.30** Pump Up the Volume (1990) (3027944). **12.30** SFW (1995) (6944093). **2.30** Lou Reed: Rock'n'Roll Heart (6233180). **3.30 - 6.00** Angel (1982) (4039557).

Sky One
7.00 Simpsons (74437). **7.30** Chris Evans (68470). **8.30** Hollywood Squares (82031). **9.00** Guilty! (31606). **10.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (69128). **11.00** Oprah (62692). **12.00** Chris Evans (1270654). **1.00** Days of Our Lives (6532448). **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (5128079). **3.00** Jenny Jones (5602429). **4.00** Guilty! (10063). **5.00** Deep Space Nine (5642). **6.00** Married with Children (5963). **6.30** Friends (8215). **7.00** The Simpsons (1031). **7.30** Real TV (2405). **8.00** Stargate SG-1 (38686). **9.00** The X Files (41050). **10.00** Millennium (38437). **11.00** Friends (10882). **11.30** Deep Space Nine (60302). **12.30** Renegade (35089). **1.30 - 7.00** Long Play (4117757).

Sky Sports 1
7.00 Centre (7128296). **7.15** Football (5220791). **8.15** Centre (8337944). **8.30** Racing News (11493). **9.00** Golf (4493550). **1.00** Boxing (63857). **3.00** V-Max (9882). **3.30** Scottish Football (87562). **4.30** Football (18321). **6.30** Unbelievable (1382). **7.00** Centre (7825). **6.30** Pool (52566). **7.30** Golf (875873). **10.00** Centre (537789). **10.15** Pool (947283). **11.15** Watersports (945695). **12.45** Centre (2295364). **12.30** Football England vs Czech Republic (54258). **2.30** Pool (26258). **3.30** Centre (24530806). **3.45** Close.

Sky Sports 2
7.00 Aerobics (8573857). **7.30** Centre (9875483). **7.45** Racing (8150708). **8.15** Fastrax (4554505). **8.45** Centre (3928079). **9.00** Fish TV (4867298). **9.30** Fish TV (777048). **10.00** Football (8581875). **11.00** Football (8580012). **12.30** Aerobics (4970760). **12.30** Football (4712857). **2.00** Equestrianism (8988298). **6.00** Golf (485165). **5.00** Fastrax (4719383). **5.30** Beach Volleyball (8277708). **6.00** Ashes Preview (7788825). **7.00** Football England vs Czech Republic (4754302). **10.30** Ashes Preview (2744873). **11.30** Unbelievable (7665741). **12.30** PGA Golf (3485871). **4.00 - 6.00** Golf (8022461).

Sky Sports 3
12.00 Unlimited (5210859). **1.00** Fish (35455854). **1.30** Fish (82204960). **6.00** Cricket (77946788). **2.30** Boxing (15833437). **3.30** Unlimited (37940383). **4.30** Drag Racing (8442340). **5.30** Watersports (89669050). **6.30** Windsurfing (82567302). **7.00** Fish TV (77940805). **7.30** Fish TV (62593595). **8.00** Ashes Preview (21178873). **9.00** Showjumping (2198437). **10.00** Olympics (53757873). **10.30** All Time Best (84443505). **11.30** Close.

UK Gold
7.00 Crossroads (7484708). **7.30** Neighbours (8480499). **7.55** EastEnders (3139332). **8.30** The Bill (6575312). **9.00** The Bill (6896652). **9.30** Bergerac (3473023). **10.20** Angels (6693878). **11.00** Dallas (5455878). **11.35** Neighbours (3555925). **12.25** EastEnders (2758418). **1.00** Juliet Bravo (2580470). **2.00** Dallas (1123845). **2.55** The Bill (1508895). **3.25** The Bill (8065012). **3.55** Bergerac (8962876). **5.30** EastEnders (4383586). **5.30** Angels (8572953). **6.00** Due South (2500234). **7.00** May to December (391448). **7.40** It Ain't Half Hot, Mum (2850437). **8.20** Dad's Army (8505708). **9.00** One Foot in the Grave (9708941). **9.40** Hamish Macbeth (33787182). **10.45** French and Saunders (8816128). **11.25** The Bill (4442654). **11.55** The Bill (6450595). **12.25** The Chief (9080161). **1.20** Between the Lines (1182638). **2.25** Take a Letter, Mister Jones (7859804). **3.45 - 7.00** Shopping with Screenshop (97758106).

Paramount Comedy Channel
7.00 Clueless (8215). **7.30** Desmonds (8031). **8.00** Roseanne (6963). **8.30** Just Shoot Me (7470). **9.00** Ellen (53321). **9.30** Seinfeld (29825). **10.00** Frasier (14505). **10.30** Cheers (90825). **11.00** Jack Dee (65166). **11.30** Larry Sanders (78418). **12.00** David Letterman (75050). **1.00** Sledge Hammer (15342). **1.30** The Critic (25890). **2.00** Dr Katz (96722). **2.30** Soap (82529). **3.00** Girls on Top (85726). **3.30** Nightstand (54838). **4.00** Close.

SUNDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

7.00 Match of the Day (S)(T) (73450). **8.30** Breakfast with Frost (S)(T) (34080). **9.30** The Heaven and Earth Show (S) (16370). **10.30** The Life of Birds (S)(T) (6463009). **11.20** Gardeners' World Take Two (R)(S)(T) (9555912). **11.30** CountryFile (S)(T) (2641). **12.00** On the Record (S)(T) (71196). **1.00** EastEnders (R)(S)(T) (2984047). **2.25** Children in Need (S) (4890615).

2.40 FILM Swiss Family Robinson (1960). Lively Disney adventure with John Mills (T) (68825370).

4.45 Children of the New Forest (S)(T) (472554). **5.15** News (T) (8700554). **5.35** Regional News; Weather (391467).

5.40 Songs of Praise (S)(T) (252660).

6.15 Last of the Summer Wine. Long-running sitcom (R)(S)(T) (493047).

6.45 Antiques Roadshow. The team visit Ormskirk in Lancashire (S)(T) (915912).

7.30 Wildlife on One. An intimate study of the British otter (R)(S)(T) (115).

8.00 Ballykissangel. Mac is visited by an old friend with a problem (S)(T) (946573).

8.50 Keeping Up Appearances. Repeated sitcom (S)(T) (172134).

9.20 News; Weather (T) (997931).

9.30 Vanity Fair. Becky's now married to Rawdon Crawley, but that doesn't stop her bestowing her charms on Jos Sedley and George Osborne (S)(T) (61825).

10.30 Veterans: the Last Survivors of the Great War. More remarkable 100-year-olds look back on their part in The Great War (S)(T) (915115).

11.20 Everyman (S)(T) (213554).

12.10 FILM Ned Kelly (1970). Mick Jagger stars in this celebration of the 19th-century Irish Rebel (786413).

1.50 The Sky at Night (S)(T) (6645351). **2.10** Joins BBC News 24 (60191546). To 6am.

BBC2

7.30 Teletubbies (S) (1202592). **8.00** Wham! Bam! Strawberry Jam! (R)(S) (7491318). **8.25** Artbox Bunch (R)(S) (7489573). **8.40** Terrible Thunderlizards (R)(S)(T) (6938979). **8.50** Incredible Hulk (R)(S) (8895221). **9.15** Casper (S) (2500950). **9.40** Microsoap (S)(T) (9476283). **10.10** The Wayne Manifesto (S) (3222486). **10.35** Grange Hill (R)(S)(T) (5271979). **11.00** Sort It (S) (9390134). **11.25** Grange Hill (R)(S)(T) (9802931). **11.50** The O Zone (R)(S) (7025860). **12.05** Simpsons (R)(S)(T) (4920202). **12.30** Robot Wars (R)(S)(T) (83931). **1.00** Around Westminster (57689). **1.30** Sunday Grandstand (S) (59415283). **1.35** Rugby League – Great Britain vs New Zealand (1593757). **2.25** Rugby Union (3160931). **3.30** Motor Sport (4138863). **4.10** Ice Skating (9593399). **5.10** Animal Zone (S) (9334912). **5.15** Watch Out Britain (S) (4583554). **5.25** Big Cat Diary (S)(T) (5838979).

5.50 The Natural World (S)(T) (730863).

6.45 Star Trek: Voyager (S)(T) (913554).

7.30 The Money Programme (T) (757).

8.00 Earth Story. Series charting the history of the Earth (S)(T) (944115).

8.50 Noughts and One. Decoding the mysteries of digital TV (S) (681467).

9.00 Ray Mears' World of Survival. New series (S) (9318).

9.30 Clarkson. New talk show, with Jeremy Clarkson and Ian Botham (S) (857467).

10.10 Moviedrome (835047).

10.15 FILM Leon (1994). Jean Reno stars as a milk-supping assassin with a truant in tow. Stylish New York crime drama (S)(T) (416405).

12.00 Moviedrome (1812103).

12.05 FILM Le Samourai (1967). Dark and moody French thriller starring Alain Delon as a hitman (865974).

1.45 Close. 2.00 Learning Zone (41693535). To 6.10am.

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (95689). **8.00** Diggit (3241776). **9.25** House of Toons (S)(T) (2593660). **9.50** Power Rangers Turbo (S)(T) (9235486). **10.15** Finders Keepers (R)(S)(T) (226202). **10.45** Minty (S)(T) (225573). **11.15** Morning Worship (S)(T) (246860). **12.15** Link (S)(T) (3724283). **12.30** Soccer Sunday (87757). **1.00** News; Weather (T) (98272931). **1.10** Jonathan Dimbleby (S)(T) (5366196). **2.00** Granada News (T) (50490573). **2.05** Sunday Supplement (28099757).

2.35 FILM Casey's Shadow (1978). Horse-trainer Walter Matthau struggles to bring up three sons (34931554).

4.35 Coronation Street (R)(T) (4232775).

5.35 Bee Gees – a Message to You. Pop behind the scenes (S) (713196).

6.30 Cartoon (334467).

6.40 Granada News (T) (625221).

6.45 News; Weather (T) (466405).

7.00 Dog Squad (T) (4405).

7.30 Coronation Street (T) (283).

8.00 You've Been Framed! (S)(T) (7775).

8.30 Heartbeat (S)(T) (34316).

9.30 CHOICE Cold Feet. We rejoin the young professionals living in Manchester. See *Choice*, below (S)(T) (89221).

10.30 Sermon from St Albions. Topical satire (910370).

10.40 News; Weather (T) (930134).

10.55 South Bank Show (S)(T) (634738).

11.55 Sunday Night (S) (683399). **12.55** In Bed with Medinner (R)(S) (5891054).

1.25 FILM A Chorus of Disapproval (1989). Timid widower Jeremy Irons tries his hand at amateur dramatics (953264).

3.00 H2O (3999326). **3.40** Motor Racing (R) (3268448). **4.35** Nightscreen (8209644). **5.30** News (70326). To 6am.

Channel 4

6.20 Camberwick Green (R)(T) (6820487). **6.35** Frootie Tooties (R) (7836221). **6.45** Dog City (R) (9970405). **7.10** Home to Rent (2538047). **7.35** Tintin (R) (2328641). **8.05** Johnny Bravo (R) (1982912). **8.35** Sister Sister (1020318). **9.05** Wise Up (2990028). **9.40** Planet Pop (9246592). **10.00** Waltons (51405). **11.00** Hollycaks (9349776). **12.10** Late Lunch with Mel and Sue (T) (5566841). **1.10** Travelog Treks (R)(S)(T) (96267009). **1.25** Racing from Cheltenham (61632115). **3.45** Football Italia (933825).

5.20 FILM Forbidden Planet (1956). Leslie Nielsen attempts to locate crew members of a spaceship which vanished 20 years previously. Disarmingly dated sci-fi favourite, bursting with colour and ideas (T) (20901080).

7.15 Joe Public. Joe Layburn fights battles on behalf of the public. He starts with the case of disgruntled Olympic swimmer Sharron Davies (T) (544573).

8.00 Shell Shock. Sufferers from the Second World War recall their experiences, including treatments which differed greatly from those meted out in the First World War (T) (3863).

9.00 Rory Bremner... Who Else? Rory Bremner proffers another selection of sketches and stand-up (663554).

9.45 The Mark Thomas Comedy Product (T) (509825).

10.00 FILM Kill Me Again (1989). Private eye Val Kilmer soon regrets his involvement with mystery lady Joanne Whalley-Kilmer (T) (508825).

11.50 Dark Skies (R)(S)(T) (675370). **12.50** Babylon 5 (R)(S)(T) (4153055).

1.40 FILM Katilon Ke Katil (1981). Hindi comic thriller (18212516).

4.30 Calcutta Chronicles (R)(S)(T) (45245). **5.00** Bombay Chat (R) (22806). **5.30** Hangin' with Mr Cooper (R)(S)(T) (3123448). **5.55** Sesame Street (3171719). To 7am.

Channel 5

6.00 Virgin Gardeners (R)(S) (1804641). **6.30** Havakazoo (R)(S) (3151405). **7.00** Dappledown Farm (R) (6568221). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (3565973). **7.35** Wimzie's House (R)(S) (1089757). **8.00** Alpha Zone (R)(S) (2972399). **8.30** My Sunday (S) (2964370). **9.00** Stickin' Around (2968950). **9.30** Fort Boyard (S)(T) (4518283). **10.30** Sister Said (S) (2984134). **11.00** Darla (R)(S) (8971554). **11.30** Singled Out (S) (8972283). **12.00** The Mag (S) (92901370). **1.10** 5 News (S)(T) (12599824). **1.20** The Movie Chart Show (S) (5473912). **1.50** Exclusive (S) (49631757). **2.55** Family Affairs Omnibus (R)(S)(T) (50023680).

5.10 FILM The Canterville Ghost (1992). Oscar Wilde's classic story about a ghost's attempts to rid himself of human housemates. With Patrick Stewart, Neve Campbell (T) (85581573).

7.00 We Are Family. This six-part overview of family life begins by looking at the phenomenon of stepfamilies. We join two parents as they prepare to tie the knot for the second time (S)(T) (5124554).

7.30 Serious Money. Becky Anderson and Mark Jeffries present advice on making the most of your cash (S) (5615738).

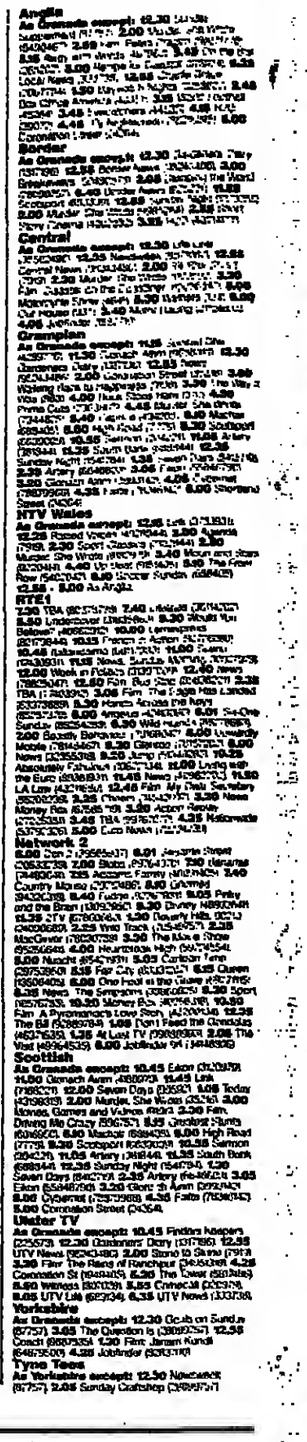
8.00 Paradise in Peril. Film about a remarkable island in a remote river in West Africa. The last relic of a once vast forest, it now boasts the highest density of primates in the world (S)(T) (9473202).

9.00 FILM Cadillac Man (1990). Motormouth Robin Williams is in overdrive as a fast-talking car salesman who needs all his wits about him when deranged Tim Robbins holds everyone hostage in the showroom (T) (81392405).

10.50 The Comedy Store. Stand-up with Peter Kay, Roger Monkhouse, Mike Gunn and Phil Davey (S) (7984793).

11.25 Sports Talk with Steve Scott (S) (4437318). **11.55** NHL – American Ice Hockey (S) (59077467). **4.40** Tibs and Fibs (R)(S) (92058448). **5.05** You Again? (47020264). **5.30** Serious Money (S) (1705326). To 6am.

ITV/Regions



SUNDAY CHOICE

TAKING UP where the pilot (which won the Golden Rose of Montreux) left off, Mike Bullen's series, **Cold Feet (9.30pm ITV,** *left*) follows three couples. It is not hard to see why it has been compared with *Friends*. After nine months, Adam (James Nesbitt) and Rachel (Helen Baxendale) are still unsure about moving in together. Karen (Hermione Norris) and David (Robert Bathurst) spend the little time they see each other arguing. Meanwhile, Jenny (Fay Ripley) and Pete (John Thomson) panic about the imminent birth of their first child.

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier
6.00 Femmes Fatales (5778). 6.30 Old Gringo (989) (59212). 8.30 The Skateboard Kid 2 (995) (44009). 10.30 Homeward Bound II: Lost in San Francisco (996) (89554). 12.30 Hollywood Buzz (475). 1.00 The Skateboard Kid 2 (995) (89534). 3.00 Old Gringo (989) (95486). 5.00 Homeward Bound II (996) (98878). 7.00 Tom and Huck (995) (70554). 8.00 Bary Normans Film Night (2473). 9.30 Broken Arrow (996) (590405). 11.30 When Men's Burden (999) (83313). 1.00 The Crossing Guard (995) (93483). 2.55 Rich Man's Wife (996) (439889). 4.30 - 6.00 Tom and Huck (995) (43993).

Sky MovieMax
6.00 Dogmatic (996) (5467). 8.00 The Babysitters Club (995) (43912). 10.00 Cinema Paradiso (988) (20757). 12.00 Godzilla vs Megalon (976) (93933). 6.00 Dogmatic (996) (3070). 8.00 The Babysitters Club (995) (8539644). 5.45 Cinema Paradiso (988) (14398222). 8.00 Temptress Moon (996) (63979). 10.00 Laws of Gravity (995) (16983). 11.45 Moderak (998) (38238). 12.15 Moonlight and Valentino (995) (845635). 3.00 - 5.00 Nixon (995) (482077).

Sky Cinema
11.00 Too Many Girls (943) (2398844). 12.30 East of Eden (995) (312809). 2.30 Earth vs the Flying Saucers (956) (934399). 4.00 Flying Leathernecks (951) (1690825). 6.00 Mr Lucky (943) (8450467). 7.45 Adrian and Consort (1993) (8980003). 10.00 American Gigolo (980) (430738). 12.00 Wall Street (987) (8879984). 2.05 - 4.45 Young Lions (958) (1660426).

FilmFour
5.00 Bob le Flambeur (955) (2479503). 6.00 Metropolitan (990) (2636467). 10.00 sex, lies and videotape (989) (6856738). 12.00 Trainspotting (998) (938987). 1.30 Pusher (996) (6846326). 3.00 Trust (997) (3780264). 4.45 - 6.00 A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies (7853359).

Sky One
6.00 Hour of Power (2373). 7.00 Bump in the Night (67083). 7.30 Wild West Cowboys of Mesa Verde (8615). 8.00 Double Dragon (8967). 8.30 Tattooed Teenage Alien Fighters from Beverly Hills (8896). 9.00 The Simpsons (37172). 9.30 Count Duckula (4828). 10.00 Dream Team (8239). 11.00 World Wrestling Federation Superstars (95868). 12.00 Sea Rescue (28028). 12.30 Sea Rescue (16641). 1.00 The New Adventures of Superman (10163). 2.00 The Newlywed Game (2823). 2.30 The Newlywed Game (8944). 3.00 M*A*S*H (4660). 3.30 M*A*S*H (9882). 4.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (95844). 5.00 Star Trek: Voyager (5912). 6.00 The Simpsons (3383). 6.30 The Simpsons (8825). 7.00 King of the Hill (6943). 7.30 King of the Hill (7008). 8.00 Earth: Final Conflict (54487). 9.00 Prickly Heat (67939). 10.00 Britain Sex (77318). 11.00 South Park (98573). 11.30 Forever Knight (93028). 12.30 Tales from the Crypt (75351). 1.00 Manhunter (46061). 2.00 - 2.00 Long Play (9495351).

Sky Sports 1
6.00 Sports Unlimited (68853). 7.00 Gillette World Sport Special (94912). 7.30 Rebel TV (33047). 8.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (26738). 8.30 H2O Have Round the Island Race (20009). 9.00 Saturday Fight Night (98453). 11.00 Goals on Sunday (98487). 12.00 Gillette World Sport Special (24825). 12.30 Speedbouts Boxing (84993). 1.30 Tribute to the Don (98373). 3.00 Ford Super Sunday: Coventry v Everton (7758808). 5.30 Pool (98487). 7.30 Tribute to the Don (26825). 8.00 NFL New York Giants v Green Bay Packers (4939738). 12.30 Athletics (98853). 1.00 Wrestling - Survivor Series (5580359). 6.00 Close.

Sky Sports 2
6.00 Motor Sport: Champion of the Future (2885554). 6.30 Inside the Senior PGA Tour (7596868). 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (8639847). 7.30 Robot Mundial (8654738). 8.00 Soccer Extra (2050488). 11.00 Sports Unlimited (8630959). 12.00 Football (5722338). 6.00 Pool: the Duel (988 (4238815). 4.00 Bodybuilding (4948860). 5.00 NASCAR (4030008). 7.00 Drag Racing (8033828). 8.00 Watersports World (8048579). 9.00 Pool (8038009). 10.00 Tribute to the Don (2885376). 11.30 NASCAR (2898047). 1.30 Football (8148828). 2.30 Football (2285948). 3.30 Close.

Sky Sports 3
11.30 Futures in Sport (3852986). 12.00 Drag Racing (3520860). 1.00 Basketball Birmingham Bullets v Derby Storm (8747263). 3.00 International Rugby League: Great Britain v New Zealand (5080080). 5.00 Beach Volleyball (7709829). 6.30 Athletics (5398828). 8.00 Scottish Football: Dunfermline v Dundee (5917868). 9.30 Spanish Football (8088993). 10.30 Ford Football Special: Coventry v Everton (8885738). 12.00 Close.

UK Gold
7.00 Big Break (752692). 7.30 Mastermind (3448376). 8.05 Blakes Seven (7495047). 8.00 Dr Who Omnibus: The Three Doctors (3294080). 10.50 Dallas Omnibus (6850778). 12.40 Film: Battle of the River Plate (957) (4784060). 5.00 The Bill Omnibus (952752). 6.30 Dangerfield (9805573). 8.30 Home to Roost (984399). 7.10 Butterflies (2954057). 7.45 The Detectives (2918682). 8.25 Only Fools and Horses (5088863). 9.05 Taggart: the Movie: Rogues' Gallery (2583953). 10.45 Minder (8529842). 11.50 This Life (6746455). 12.45 Love of Jonathan (7834059). 1.15 Howards' Way (7831869). 1.45 The Onedin Line (4779126). 2.45 - 7.00 Shopping with Screenshop (9782624).

Paramount Comedy Channel
7.00 Clueless (9829). 7.30 Desmonds (5283). 8.00 Roseanne (8573). 8.30 Just Shoot Me (7083). 9.00 Film: Moonstruck (1987) (35738). 11.00 Euroboat (8107). 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show (85369). 12.00 Armstrong and Miller (99245). 12.30 In Bed with Medinner (24897). 1.00 Comedy Store (46473). 1.30 Club Class (59055). 2.00 Dr Katz (32661). 2.30 Sex (24448). 3.00 Tibs and Fibs (3177). 3.30 Nightstand (35500). 5.00 Close.

MONDAY TELEVISION

BBC1

6.00 Business Breakfast (39535). **7.00** News (T) (81451). **9.00** Kilroy (S)(T) (8556239). **9.40** Style Challenge (S) (9455790). **10.05** City Hospital (S)(T) (9599603). **10.55** News (T) (9359887). **11.00** Real Rooms (S) (9369264). **11.25** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (S)(T) (9362351). **11.55** News (T) (8218626). **12.00** Pass the Buck (S) (4990061). **12.25** Going for a Song (S) (4813968). **12.50** Weather (S)(T) (2461500). **1.00** News (T) (13968). **1.30** Regional News (73322622). **1.40** Neighbours (S)(T) (67878239). **2.05** Ironside (R) (9101429). **2.55** Wipeout (R)(S) (2394622).

3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6050806). **3.45** Enchanted Lands (8463500). **3.55** Little Monsters (S) (3608061). **4.00** The Animal Magic Show (S)(T) (4712719). **4.15** Alvin and the Chipmunks (9255061). **4.40** Goosebumps (S)(T) (2325603). **5.00** Newsround (S)(T) (4564429). **5.10** Blue Peter (S)(T) (5706326).

5.35 Neighbours (S)(T) (712852).

6.00 News; Weather (T) (871).

6.30 Regional News (T) (351).

7.00 This Is Your Life (S)(T) (3245).

7.30 Here and Now (S)(T) (535).

8.00 EastEnders (S)(T) (2993).

8.30 Birds of a Feather. The Essex-girl comedy returns (S)(T) (8500).

9.00 News; Weather (T) (1622).

9.30 Absolutely Fabulous – the Collection (S)(T) (41622).

10.00 Panorama (T) (920719).

10.40 They Think It's All Over (R)(S)(T) (312245). **11.10** On Side (S) (671871). **11.55** Chicago Hope (S)(T) (643603). **12.40** Weird Science (S)(T) (3115562).

1.05 FILM The Hellfire Club (1963). Keith Michell in 18th-century romp (1080340).

2.35 Joins BBC News 24 (91475320). To 6am.

BBC2

6.10 Autism (T) (3063326). **6.35** The World's Best Athlete? (T) (9938429). **7.00** Tales of Aesop (R)(S) (5604500). **7.05** Teletubbies (S) (2415142). **7.30** Tom and Jerry Kids (S) (2217581). **7.55** Blue Peter (S)(T) (5519871). **8.20** Robinson Sucroe (9282516). **8.45** Penny Crayon (S) (6997622). **8.55** Tales of Aesop (R)(S) (5486993). **9.00** Job Bank (S) (7421968). **9.10** Short Circuit (S) (5809142). **9.30** Writing and Pictures (S)(T) (8539061). **9.45** Storytime (S) (8534516). **10.00** Teletubbies (R)(S) (62790). **10.30** Words and Pictures (S) (3092142). **10.45** Cats' Eyes (3097697). **11.00** Look and Read (S) (9798784). **11.20** Zig Zag (S)(T) (4240887). **11.40** Landmarks (S)(T) (1146784). **12.05** History File (4997974). **12.30** Working Lunch (56500). **1.00** Penny Crayon (R)(S) (98252177). **1.10** Sophie Grigson's Herbs (S) (43169177). **1.15** The History Hour (R)(S) (815177). **2.15** Top Gear Motorsport (S) (942055). **2.45** News (T) (7049413). **2.50** On Cue (S) (6231055). **3.25** News (T) (7816719). **3.30** Gardeners' World (R)(S)(T) (429). **4.00** Change That (R)(S)(T) (3510852). **4.25** Ready Steady Cook (S)(T) (3520239). **4.55** Lowri (S)(T) (5338413). **5.30** Today's the Day (S)(T) (500).

6.00 The Simpsons (R)(S)(T) (446500).

6.25 Space 1999 (R) (773564).

7.15 Hit, Miss or Maybe (R)(S) (187245).

7.30 Sound Stories (S) (177).

8.00 The Essential Guide to Rocks. With Ray Mears (S)(T) (9185).

8.30 Food and Drink (S)(T) (6142).

9.00 The Cops. Danny and Jellicoe find themselves stuck in the town centre on a Saturday night (S)(T) (838603).

9.50 Ads Infinitum (S)(T) (946264).

10.00 Big Train (S) (13036).

10.30 Newsnight (T) (457448).

11.20 The Baby Business (S) (209559). **12.00** Despatch Box (S) (35920). **12.30** Learning Zone (18454340). To 6.10am.

ITV Granada

6.00 GMTV (9069351). **9.25** Trisha (S)(T) (3820528). **10.15** This Morning (T) (808852). **12.15** Granada News (T) (3628055). **12.30** News (T) (50326). **1.00** Home and Away (S)(T) (3983235). **1.25** Jerry Springer Show (S)(T) (7199993). **2.10** Coronation Street (R)(T) (10569610). **2.40** Shortland Street (S) (2390806). **3.10** News Headlines (T) (2823429).

3.20 Children's ITV: Wizadora (R) (2836993). **3.35** Titch (S) (7105581). **3.50** Sooty & Co (S)(T) (2301697). **4.15** Art Attack (S)(T) (839142). **4.45** Sabrina, the Teenage Witch (S)(T) (7744871). **5.10** Home and Away (S)(T) (4783332). **5.40** News; Weather (T) (702036).

5.55 Granada Tonight (T) (5643535).

7.00 Wheel of Fortune (S)(T) (5413).

7.30 Coronation Street. Tony gets another visit from his creditors but Des takes the full force of their rage (T) (603).

8.00 World in Action. Report on crank calls made to 999, which wastes operators' time and stretches the already burdened emergency service (S)(T) (7061).

8.30 Great Escapes. Real-life video of escapes from disasters, presented by racing driver Martin Brundle (S)(T) (3528).

9.00 CHOICE Vice – The Sex Trade. First of a three-part investigation into prostitution. Women who work as prostitutes talk openly about their lives. See *Choice*, below (S)(T) (9581).

10.00 News; Weather (T) (25142).

10.30 Granada News (T) (374871).

10.40 Veronica's Closet (T) (234413).

11.10 Dharma and Greg (S)(T) (817516). **11.40** Stuff the Week (S) (248622). **12.10** Public Morals (7425123). **12.40** Nationwide Football League Extra (1517727). **1.40** World Football (8194727). **2.05** Club@Vision (S) (3288291). **2.45** Trisha (R)(S)(T) (9338307). **3.30** World in Action (S)(T) (21022291). **3.55** Soundtrax (S) (30411456). **4.20** ITV Nightscreen (3075524). **5.30** News (30475). To 6am.

Channel 4

7.00 The Big Breakfast (S)(T) (32149). **9.00** Channel 4 Schools (T) (965449). **11.30** Here's One I Made Earlier (R)(S)(T) (9697). **12.00** Sesame Street (22055). **12.30** Brookside (T) (58968). **1.00** Judge Joe Brown (T) (5146158). **1.35** The Ocean World of John Stoneman (67858429).

2.05 FILM Out of the Clouds (1957). Episodic drama set in fog-bound London Airport. With Robert Beatty (4377806).

3.30 Collectors' Lot (S)(T) (697). **4.00** Fifteen to One (S)(T) (332). **4.30** Countdown (S)(T) (7827158). **4.55** Montel Williams (S)(T) (5373581).

5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow (S)(T) (968).

6.00 Roseanne (R)(S)(T) (581).

6.30 Hollyoaks (S)(T) (531).

7.00 News; Weather (S)(T) (994351).

7.50 Talking Heads (T) (399546).

8.00 How One Is 50: Charles Windsor's School Days. A look back at the childhood of Prince Charles (S)(T) (3577).

9.00 Witness. Twenty years ago this week, 913 followers of the Rev Jim Jones died in Jonestown, Guyana. The world's press reported the event as a mass suicide, but survivors who talk here for the first time call it mass murder (T) (3361).

10.00 Anatomy of Desire. Four-parter analysing human sexual desire. It starts by exploring instinct and asks if men and women are designed to seek long-term, secure relationships, peppered with sex on the side (S)(T) (7270808).

11.05 Crazy, Sexy, Cool (T) (606177). **12.10** Driving Miss Crazy (4759497).

12.25 FILM Mixing Nia (1998). Romantic comedy about a woman's indecisiveness concerning the men in her life (232949).

2.10 Videoplaya (1200291). **2.40** Booked (R)(T) (8590611). **3.20** Dispatches (T) (5275475). **3.45** Small War (36654253). **4.00** Schools (T) (25765). To 6am.

Channel 5

6.00 5 News and Sport (S) (2879516). **7.00** WideWorld (R)(S)(T) (6535993). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (7860185). **7.35** What-a-Mess (R) (1056429). **8.00** Havakazoo (R)(S) (2869671). **8.30** Dappledown Farm (2868142). **9.00** The Great House Game (R)(S)(T) (7788210). **9.25** Russell Grant's Postcards (4614806). **9.30** Oprah (1901559). **10.20** Sunset Beach (S)(T) (2472535). **11.10** Leeza (R)(S) (9314500). **12.00** 5 News (S)(T) (2942158). **12.30** Family Affairs (S)(T) (7700326). **1.00** The Bold and the Beautiful (S)(T) (6534264). **1.30** Sons and Daughters (7709697). **2.00** 100 Per Cent Gold (S) (5017210). **2.30** Good Afternoon (S) (6502993).

3.30 FILM Bury Me in Niagara (1992). Jean Stapleton stars as a mother who meddles from beyond the grave in this wearyingly contrived caper (T) (2505451).

5.20 The Roseanne Show (1342531).

6.00 100 Per Cent (S) (5695974).

6.30 Family Affairs (S)(T) (5513326).

7.00 5 News (S)(T) (5028326).

7.30 Wild World (S)(T) (5502210).

8.00 Floyd Uncorked. Keith Floyd tours the vineyards of France (S)(T) (5100974).

8.30 The Antiques Hunter. David Dickinson helps find some bisque "piano babies" dolls (S)(T) (5016581).

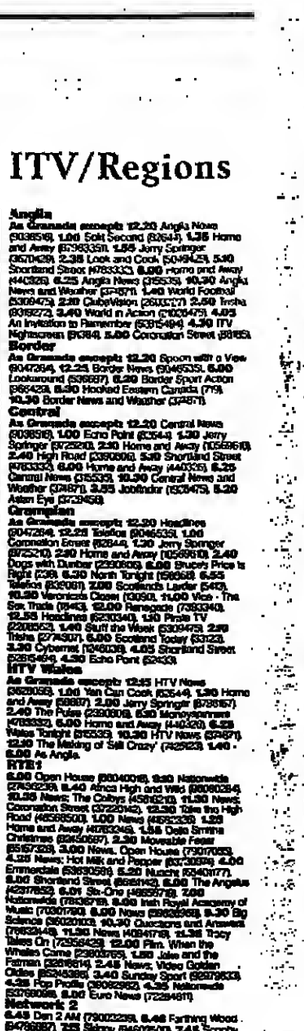
9.00 FILM Janek – a Silent Betrayal (1994). Crime thriller about a bizarre murder spree in which six tenants of an apartment building are murdered in New York. With Richard Crenna, William Shatner (S)(T) (81369177).

10.50 Dr Fox's Chart Update (4312055).

10.55 FILM A Boy Called Hate (1995). Angry delinquent Scott Caan takes off on a motorbike with bolshy Missy Crider (15280516).

12.45 NFL Live – Kansas City Chiefs vs Denver Broncos (S) (85569456). **4.40** Prisoner: Cell Block H (2821017). **5.30** 100 Per Cent (R)(S) (1772096). To 6am.

ITV/Regions



MONDAY CHOICE

ITV'S NEW three-part exploration of the sex trade, **Vice: the Sex Trade (9pm ITV,** *left*), is like prostitution itself – it doesn't offer much that is new. Tonight's opening film flits between various working women, and one client, Peter, a single 31-year-old, unconvincingly claiming that his weekly visits to have his bottom thrashed by Karen are more fulfilling than his mates' marriages. The hookers range from Kat, an escort wined, dined and screwed by businessmen in Nottingham hotels, to Gemma, 19, on the streets since she was 14.

SATELLITE & CABLE

Sky Premier
6.00 The Princess Bride (987) (68635). 8.00 The Lies He Told (998) (50313). 10.00 The Santa Clause (994) (29148). 12.00 The Princess Bride (987) (28335). 2.00 Lies He Told (998) (32238). 3.30 Barry Normans Film Night (424). 4.00 The Santa Clause (994) (8332). 6.00 Angels in the Attic (997) (33697). 8.00 The Odyssey (997) (15874). 10.30 Shakespeare (998) (4291503). 12.15 A Thin Line between Love and Hate (996) (50727). 2.45 Original Gangsters (999) (40382). 4.30 - 6.00 Angels in the Attic (997) (28008).

Sky MovieMax
6.00 Seasons of the Heart (994) (62987). 7.30 Family Blessings (999) (42213). 8.00 Alaska (998) (27687). 11.00 Where the Red Fern Grows (994) (27687). 1.00 Where the Red Fern Grows Part II (991) (2143). 3.00 Seasons of the Heart (994) (27448). 5.00 Family Blessings (999) (32213). 7.00 Alaska (998) (32087). 8.00 Vows of Deception (998) (38871). 11.00 Kiss of a Stranger (997) (382238). 12.30 Hard Men (997) (3998038). 3.00 - 6.00 Breaking the Waves (996) (8218489).

Sky Cinema
4.00 Magic Town (947) (554497). 6.00 Term of Trial (962) (8491254). 8.00 The Black Windmill (974) (8398581). 10.00 The Front Page (974) (8031254). 11.45 Mr Majestyk (974) (9727793). 1.30 The Kremlin Letter (970) (2587582). 3.35 King Kong (1933) (8750338). 5.15 Close.

FilmFour
5.00 Crimewave (995) (2436522). 6.00 Don Juan DeMarco (1995) (2330338). 10.00 The Madness of King George (1994) (6742210). 12.00 Baron Fink (1991) (17851). 2.00 Public Access (1993) (821017). 3.30 - 5.30 Crimewave (1985) (4095523).

Sky One
7.00 Earthworm Jim (34428). 7.30 The Simpsons (48254). 8.00 Simpsons (40809). 8.30 Hollywood Squares (62700). 9.00 Sarah...Surviving Life (23763). 10.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (42448). 11.00 Oprah (59764). 12.00 Jenny Jones (238210). 1.00 Days of Our Lives (9651874). 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (8257039). 3.00 Jenny Jones (8347039). 4.00 Sarah...Surviving Life (55939). 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (2139). 6.00 Married with Children (7718). 6.30 Friends (8871). 7.00 The Simpsons (3667). 7.30 Real TV (4055). 8.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (94524). 9.00 Sliders (72832). 10.30 South Park (30809). 10.30 Seinfeld (53388). 11.00 Friends (99622). 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (9332). 12.30 Renegade (1096). 1.30 - 7.00 Long Play (4242933).

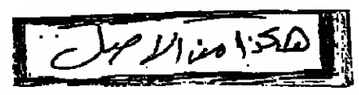
Sky Sports 1
7.00 Football Special (4503). 8.30 Racing News (80168). 9.00 Aerobics (9214). 9.30 Athletics (36871). 10.00 Scottish Football (98800). 11.00 Football (85294). 12.00 Aerobics (94899). 12.30 What a Weekend (10887). 1.00 Football Special (82809). 3.30 Spanish Football (40867). 4.30 What a Weekend (9868). 5.00 Pool (2780). 6.00 Sky Sports Centre (7853). 6.30 What a Weekend (8868). 7.00 Monday Night Football: Nottingham Forest v Derby County (77024653). 10.35 Sports Centre (5437301). 10.30 Football League Review (88987). 11.30 V-Max (40816). 12.00 Sky Sports Centre (2285383). 12.45 Monday Night Football (59723). 2.45 Football League Review (98723). 3.45 Centre (8858028). 3.50 Close.

Sky Sports 2
7.00 Aerobics (8539943). 7.30 Racing (8621449). 8.00 Pool (5860165). 9.00 NASCAR (7035793). 11.00 Tribute to the Don (2880730). 12.30 Fight Night (8494943). 2.30 Drag Racing (27068822). 3.30 Tribute to the Don (2852223). 5.00 Football League Review (4857291). 6.00 Table Tennis: Italian Open (7755598). 7.00 World Motor Sport (2798213). 11.00 Table Tennis (8811083). 12.00 Windsurfing (2725662). 12.30 Watersports World (2797368). 1.30 V-Max (2855068). 2.00 Centre (3109761). 2.55 Close.

Sky Sports 3
12.00 NFL (78486600). 3.30 NASCAR (8440346). 5.30 V-Max (5855868). 6.00 Pool (3850644). 7.00 Fish TV (7709981). 7.30 Fish TV (8254942). 8.00 Windsurfing (7798258). 8.30 Wrestling (3810718). 11.30 Close.

UK Gold
7.00 Crossroads (7593284). 7.30 Neighbours (8400068). 7.55 EastEnders (9439777). 8.30 The Bill (8848868). 9.00 The Bill (8735449). 9.30 Benjamin (3917139). 10.30 Angels (8724332). 11.00 Dallas (8894332). 11.55 Neighbours (3537621). 12.25 EastEnders (2837934). 1.00 Juliet Bravo (2553329). 2.00 Dallas (3378121). 2.55 The Bill (9637268). 3.25 The Bill (8038868). 3.55 Benjamin (8011332). 4.25 EastEnders (4346142). 5.00 Angels (6897618). 6.00 Due South (8030793). 7.00 May to December (8040868). 7.40 It Ain't Half Hot, Mum (2869003). 8.20 Dad's Army (6224854). 9.00 Voice of the Heart (5568968). 10.40 Sports Anorak (7793794). 11.35 The Bill (8408210). 11.55 The Bill (8800072). 12.25 The Chief (9874814). 1.25 Best of the Old Grey Whistle Test (8018623). 1.55 The Gaffer (8303868). 2.25 - 7.00 Shopping with Screenshop (10420869).

Paramount Comedy Channel
7.00 Clueless (1081). 7.30 Desmonds (5423). 8.00 Roseanne (4587). 8.30 Just Shoot Me (8558). 9.00 Ellen (30088). 9.30 Seinfeld (21968). 10.00 Frasier (83365). 10.30 Cheers (98903). 11.00 Jack Dee (43968). 11.30 Larry Sanders Show (46768). 12.00 David Letterman (77683). 1.00 Sledge Hammer (81279). 1.30 The Critic (10982). 2.00 Dr Katz (32662). 2.30 Soap (86003). 3.00 Girls on Top (7036). 3.30 Nightstand (75479). 4.00 Close.



SATURDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.6-99.8MHz FM)
7.00 Mark Goodier. **10.00** Chris Moyles. **1.00** Emma B. **3.00** Radio 1's R 'n' B Chart. **5.00** Judge Jules. **7.00** Danny Rampling - Lovegroove Dance Party. **9.00** Westwood - Radio 1 Rap Show. **12.00** Radio 1 Reggae Dancehall Nite. **2.00** The Essential Mix: David Holmes. **4.00 - 6.30** Charlie Jordan.

RADIO 2
(88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Mo Dutta. **8.05** Brian Matthew. **10.00** Steve Wright's Saturday Show. **1.00** John Bird: That Mocking Bird. **1.30** News Huddlines. **2.00** Alan Freeman. **3.30** Johnnie Walker. **5.30** Paul Gambaccini. **7.00** Reading Music. **8.00** David Essex in Concert. **9.00** Jimmy Ruffin. **10.00** Bob Harris. **1.00** Lynn Parsons. **2.00 - 7.00** Mo Dutta.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air. **9.00** CD Review. **11.00** Building a Library. **12.00** Private Passions. **1.00** The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. **2.00** Best of 3. **3.00** One Hundred Years of the Yellow Label. **4.15** Music as Life - a Postlude. **5.00** Jazz Record Requests. **6.00** Punk Jazz. A series of four programmes in which Charles Shaar Murray tells the remarkable story of bass player Jaco Pastorius. 1: 'Word of Mouth'. The origins of Jaco's genius. With contributions from Pat Metheny, Paul Bley, Joe Zawinul and members of Jaco's family. **7.30** Boris Berman. (R) **7.20** Opera on 3. Live from the London Coliseum, Francesca Zambello's new production for English National Opera of Musorgsky's historical epic, using Musorgsky's original orchestration and the English translation by the great Musorgsky champion David Lloyd-Jones. Tsar Boris, who murdered Dmitri, the rightful heir to the throne, is haunted by his crime and threatened by a rebellion: its leader seems to be Dmitri, risen from the dead and galvanising support among the suffering Russian people. John Tomlinson, bass (Boris), John Daszak, tenor (Dmitri), Robert Tear, tenor (Shuisky), Chorus and Orchestra of English National Opera/Paul Daniel. **9.05** The Real Boris. Robin Milner-Gulland and Geoffrey Hosking talk about the historical tsar Boris Godunov and compare him with Musorgsky's version, exploring Boris's antecedents and his legacy to Russia. **9.20** Boris Godunov, Part 2. **10.45** Best Words. Michael Rosen introduces the latest reviews, performances and interviews from the world of poetry. **11.15** Leroy Anderson. **11.30** Jazz on 3. **1.00 - 6.00** Through the Night.

RADIO CHOICE

IT HAS been 200 years since Wolfe Tone, founding father of Irish republicanism, committed suicide after a failed revolt against the British: Fergal Keane tells his story in **United Irishman (2.30pm R4)**. There's a sort of link to the new series of **Better than Sex (7.45pm R4)**: the first person to offer a favourite sensual pleasure is the Irish playwright Sebastian Barry, who, in such plays as *The Steward of Christendom*, has uncovered some of the odd relationships between the Irish and British. Later on, there's a new serialisation of **Hard Times (10.30pm World Service)**, which stars Tom Baker *(right)*. It's done in typically plain World Service style; but that suits Dickens's most direct novel.

ROBERT HANKS

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 News Briefing. **6.05** Sports Desk. **6.10** Open Country. **6.57** Weather. **7.00** Today. **9.00** Home Truths. **10.00** News; Loose Ends. **11.00** News; The Food Programme. **11.30** From Our Own Correspondent. **12.00** News; Money Box. **12.30** True Lies. **12.55** Weather. **1.00** News. **1.15** Any Questions?. **2.00** News; Any Answers? 0171 580 4444. **2.30** United Irishman. See *Pick of the Day*. **3.00** News; The Saturday Play: The Black Spectacles. (R) **4.00** News; Weekend Woman's Hour. **5.00** Saturday PM. **5.30** Talking Pictures. **5.54** Shipping Forecast. **5.57** Weather. **6.00** Six O'Clock News. **6.15** The Now Show. **6.45** You Probably Think This Song Is about You. (R) **7.00** Saturday Review. Tom Sutcliffe and guests review the week's cultural events. **7.45** Better than Sex. Four writers celebrate a single, readily available sensual experience which gives them intense pleasure. 1: 'Sebastian Barry on Putting Tobias to Bed'. See *Pick of the Day*. **8.00** The Archive Hour: Hoax. The art of hoaxing has a special place in history, from the Cottingley fairies to the man who sold the Eiffel Tower. Nick Yapp takes a look at this phenomenon, asking what makes people want to carry out a hoax and why victims are so easily hoodwinked. **9.00** News; The Classic Serial: The Warden. By Anthony Trollope, dramatised for radio in two episodes by Martyn Wade. 2: Torn between family loyalty and her love for John Bold, Eleanor Harding beseeches the latter to give up his action against her father. With Stephen Moore, Janet Maw, Peter Howell and Jilly Bond. Director Cherry Cookson. **10.00** News and Weather. **10.15** The Moral Maze. Michael Buerk, Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves, David Starkey and David Cook cross-examine guests on the moral and ethical issues behind one of the week's controversies. **11.00** News; Aerial Views. Jennifer Cox talks to four European broadcasters about the cities they work in and the music they play. 1: Sean Lovett of Radio Vaticana at the Vatican City, Rome. **11.30** Messages to Myself. Diaries by ordinary people. (R) **12.00** News. **12.25** Experimental Feature: Still No Truce. Three programmes featuring specially commissioned works from Welsh poet and priest R S Thomas. 1: 'True to My Name'. **12.30** The Late Story: A Snowman on the Old Perth Road. In John Burnside's new story, a childhood prank leaves lifelong scars. 'It was a stupid thing to do and, although the idea was his, I couldn't help thinking, later, that I was to blame.' Read by John Gordon Sinclair. **12.48** Shipping Forecast. **1.00** As World Service. **5.30** World News. **5.35** Shipping Forecast. **5.40** Inshore Forecast. **5.50 - 6.00** Bells on Sunday.

RADIO 4 LW
(198kHz)
12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(693, 909kHz MW)
6.00 Dirty Tackle. **6.30** Breakfast. **9.00** Chiles on Saturday. **11.00** Move It. **11.30** The Back Page. **12.00** Sportscall. **1.00** Sport on Five. **6.06** Six-O-Six. **8.00** Dallyn UK. Richard Dallyn with news from around the UK. **9.00** The Treatment. Stuart Maconie and guests review the week's news. **10.00** Late Night Currie. Edwina Currie with the weekend's big issues, including sport in depth at 10.30, and a news briefing at 11.00. **1.00** Up All Night. **5.00 - 6.00** Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Lucas. **8.00** Countdown. **11.00** Masters of Their Art. **12.00** Mike Read. **3.00** Margaret Howard. **6.00** Classic FM at the Movies. **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. **9.00** Opera Guide. **10.00** The Classic Quiz. **12.00** Midnight Music. **2.00** Evening Concert. **4.00 - 6.00** Sunday Start.

VIRGIN RADIO
(1215, 1197-1260kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.00 Jeremy Clark. **9.00** Harriet Scott. **12.00** Classic Countdown with Russ Williams. **2.00** Rock and Roll Football with Chris Evans. **6.00** Wheels of Steel. **10.00** Janey Lee Grace. **2.00 - 6.00** Richard West.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)
1.30 Soundworks. **1.45** Sports Roundup. **2.00** Newsday. **2.30** Music Review. **3.00** World News. **3.15** Sports Roundup. **3.30** From Our Own Correspondent. **4.00** Newsdesk. **4.30** Global Business. **5.00** Newsday. **5.30 - 6.00** Jazzmatazz.

TALK RADIO
6.00 Paul Ross and Carol McGiffin. **6.00** Wendy Lloyd. **11.30** Danny Baker and Danny Kelly. **1.00** Premiership Show with Alan Mullery. **3.00** Nationwide League Live Commentary. **5.30** Danny Baker and Danny Kelly. **7.30** Nancy Roberts. **10.00** Mike Allen. **2.00 - 6.00** Mike Dickin.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

SKY PREMIER
6.00 Stolen Women (1996) (68337). **8.00** Houseguest (1995) (13882). **10.00** D3: the Mighty Ducks (1996) (67240). **12.00** Stolen Women (1996) (36733). **2.00** Twins (1988) (39628). **3.55** Houseguest (1995) (98453). **5.45** D3: the Mighty Ducks (1996) (6547514). **7.30** Preview (7375). **8.00** Liar Liar (1997) (21462). See *Pick of the Day*. **10.00** The Glimmer Man (1996) (67511). **11.35** Virtuosity (1995) (652606). **1.25** Of Love and Shadows (1994) (68373). **3.10 - 6.00** If Lucy Fell (1996) (2572844).

SKY MOVIEMAX
6.00 Bigfoot: the Unforgettable Encounter (1994) (49511). **7.30** Angus (1995) (54254004). **9.15** Immediate Family (1990) (53130846). **11.00** Forgotten City of Planet of the Apes (1974) (30917). **1.00** Bigfoot: the Unforgettable Encounter (1994) (39820). **3.00** Marlene (1984) (30578). **5.00** Angus (1995) (58801). **6.30** Femmes Fatales (9379). See *Pick of the Day*. **7.00** Immediate Family (1990) (41153). **9.00** Mars Attacks! (1996) (70172066). **10.45** Fatal Attraction (1987) (253630). **12.45** Dangerous Liaisons (1988) (636370). **2.45** Family of Cops II (1996) (18283). **4.20 - 6.00** Marlene (1984) (47850).

SKY CINEMA
11.00 Anne of Green Gables (1934) (2957172). **12.30** Klondike Annie (1936) (2551289). **2.00** Government Girl (1943) (8444356). **4.00** Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961) (1693153). **6.00** His Kind of Woman (1951) (8457820). **8.00** Town on Trial (1957) (8436337). **10.00** Hang 'Em High (1968) (1775066). **11.55** Monsieur Verdoux (1947) (29657153). **2.00** Une Femme Francaise (1995) (3056370). **3.40** His Kind of Woman (1951) (9462776). **5.35** Close.

FILMFOUR
6.00 Ghidora, the Three Headed Monster (1965) (2497578). **6.00** Muriel's Wedding (1994) (2469795). **10.00** The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994) (8689066). **12.00** Romper Stomper (1993) (831215). **1.30** Backbeat (1993) (5544080). **3.10** Bandwagon (1995) (91822028).

BRAVO
8.00 The Extremists (3134462). **8.30** Rab C Nesbitt (3120269). **9.00** LA Detectives (9999004). **10.00** Italian Stripping Housewives (6741337). **10.30** Taxicab Confessions (6783085). **11.00** Film: Porky's Revenge (1985) (7443917). **1.00** Sex Bytes (5056028). **1.35** Film: Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death (1989) (3949883). **3.30** Film: Tourist Trap (1979) (7415134). **5.30 - 6.00** The Extremists (9329196).

SATELLITE CHOICE

THE TRUMAN SHOW revealed a new Jim Carrey, one capable of going for virtually an entire movie without pulling a face. But he made his name as a gurner and those abilities are on display in **Liar Liar (8pm Sky Premier)**, Brian Grazer's lightweight satellite premiere. Carrey plays Fletcher Reede, a high-flying lawyer who has made his way to the top by being economical with the truth. When he misses his son Max's fifth birthday party, Max makes a birthday wish that his father tell the truth for 24 hours, and Carrey's life is turned upside-down. Glenn Close *(right)*, the subject of tonight's **Femmes Fatales (6.30pm Sky MovieMax)**, specialises in more serious roles. This profile is followed tonight by an evening of her films; *Immediate Family* (7pm), *Mars Attacks!* (9pm), *Fatal Attraction* (10.45pm), and *Dangerous Liaisons* (12.45am).

JAMES RAMPTON

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
4.00 Wings over Vietnam (662820). **5.00** Battlefields (6790375). **7.00** Wheels and Keels: Hovercrafts (9973066). **6.00** Raging Planet (9962714). **9.00** Extreme Machines (9902578). **10.00** Forensic Detectives (9972337). **11.00** Battlefields (7449191). **1.00** The Century of Warfare (8584592). **2.00** Close.

SKY ONE
7.00 Bump in the Night (76846). **7.30** Wild West Cowboys of Moo Mesa (55356). **8.00** The Adventures of Sinbad (54085). **9.00** The Simpsons (59733). **9.30** Count Duckula (61066). **10.00** The Best of the Chris Evans Show (44240). **11.00** Wrestling (64004). **12.00** Wrestling (84917). **1.00** The New Adventures of Superman (60337). **2.00** The Newlywed Game (8917). **2.30** The Newlywed Game (3172). **3.00** M*A*S*H (7424). **3.30** M*A*S*H (5917). **4.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (75795). **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (1004). **6.00** Xena: Warrior Princess (73801). **7.00** The Simpsons (2733). **7.30** The Simpsons (1237). **8.00** 3rd Rock from the Sun (8153). **8.30** 3rd Rock from the Sun (7288). **9.00** Space: Above and Beyond (14172). **10.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (24559). **11.00** Star Trek: Voyager (52269). **12.00** Showbiz Weekly (53950). **12.30** The Big Easy (85738). **1.30** Fire (56080). **2.30 - 6.00** Long Play (3003028).

SKY SPORTS 1
6.00 Hold the Back Page (99511). **7.00** Sports Centre (88808). **8.00** Aerobics (40694). **8.30** Racing (90135). **9.00** Back Page (37268). **10.00** World Tenpin Bowling (22268). **11.00** Max Power (84882). **12.00** Soccer Saturday (1102269). **5.30** Rugby League Great Britain v New Zealand (519085). **8.30** World Sport (4530). **6.00** Fight Night (93375). **11.00** Muscle Night - British Fitness Championships (72723). **12.00** Basketball Birmingham Bullets vs Derby Storm (39457). **2.00** Saturday Fight Night (27844). **4.00** Muscle Night (52776). **5.00** H2O (42931). **5.30 - 6.00** Futbol Mundial (78283).

SKY SPORTS 2
6.00 Rebel (2898882). **6.30** Wild Spirits (7007917). **7.00** Aerobics (9675269). **7.30** Racing News (8687004). **8.00** Soccer AM (3056443). **12.00** Volleyball (4072172). **12.30** Formula Three Racing (7816846). **1.00** Motor Sport (1260337). **6.00** Max Power (4823530). **3.00** Beach Volleyball (8369733). **6.30** Senior PGA (3350085). **7.00** Bodybuilding (8085153). **8.00** Pool: the Duel 1998 (8074801). **9.00** Motor Sport (2410646). **1.00** Wild Spirits (6416134). **1.30** Volleyball (2998554). **2.00** Rugby League Great Britain vs New Zealand (7122184). **4.00 - 6.00** Basketball (8124883).

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00 Watersports World (97450066). **1.00** Pool: the Duel 1998 (8155676). **2.00** Beach Volleyball Tour (77031801). **2.30** H2O (52697733). **3.00** Rebel TV (77027606). **3.30** Showjumping Classic (93468801). **5.30** Football Scrapbook (93464356). **7.00** Basketball Birmingham Bullets v Derby Storm (35578559). **9.00** Beach Volleyball Tour (53675559). **9.30** Wild Spirits (96000527). **10.00** International Rugby League Great Britain vs New Zealand (53659511). **12.00** Close.

EUROSPORT
7.30 Xtreme Sports (86066). **8.00** Bobsleigh (79820). **10.30** Tennis (23606). **12.00** Tennis (14820). **1.30** Tennis (37627). **3.00** Rugby Union (57269). **4.30** Tennis (11612). **6.00** Weightlifting (51627). **8.00** Boxing (32356). **9.00** Supercross (55443). **11.00** Bowling (90443). **12.00** Darts (68979). **1.00** Close.

UK GOLD
7.00 Big Break (7559820). **7.30** Neighbours (84234676). **9.25** Dallas (16629066). **12.30** EastEnders (3672180). **3.00** The Bill (3554085). **5.30** Citizen Smith (559882). **6.30** Film: Doctor in Trouble (1970) (17864056). **8.00** The Brittas Empire (7498066). **8.40** Shooting Stars (6750743). **9.20** Red Dwarf (9243820). **10.00** Men Behaving Badly (9474424). **10.40** One Foot in the Grave (8719269). **11.20** Film: Videodrome (1982) (5835646). **1.15** Best of the Old Grey Whistle Test (7937196). **1.45** Mastermind (7936457). **2.15** Film: The Lawless Frontier (1935) (4515221). **2.30 - 7.00** Shopping with Screenshop (2183825).

LIVING
6.00 Tiny Living (90498733). **9.05** Tempestt (8767288). **9.55** Rolonda (8945004). **10.45** Special Babies (5565783). **11.15** Living It Up! (3580696). **12.15** Can't Cook, Won't Cook (2165627). **12.45** Ready, Steady, Cook (9248337). **1.20** Michael Cole (1888424). **2.20** The Roseanne Show (3481578). **3.00** Film: Daisy Kenyon (1947) (52901356). **5.05** Hart to Hart (5730511). **6.00** Film: Doing Time on Maple Drive (1991) (8455462). **6.00** Rescue 911 (1696608). **8.30** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction (1600443). **9.00** Jerry Springer Double Bill (8486578). **11.00** The Sex Files II (7652563). **12.00** Close.

TNT
9.00 Kelly's Heroes (1970) (43075894). **11.30** Battleground (1949) (47459606). **1.30** They Were Expendable (1945) (63045863). **3.45** The Red Badge of Courage (1951) (29091582). **5.00** Close.

PARAMOUNT COMEDY CHANNEL
7.00 Clueless (9707). **7.30** Desmonds (4085). **8.00** Roseanne (6337). **8.30** Just Shoot Me (6172). **9.00** Film: Class (1983) (78027356). **10.45** Gogs (255356). **11.00** Eurotrash (21969). **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show (70191). **12.00** Armstrong and Miller (75196). **12.30** In Bed with Medinner (60776). **1.00** Comedy Store (67370). **1.30** Club Class (83301). **2.00** Dr Katz (78582). **2.30** Soap (84399). **3.00** Tibs and Fibs (87134). **3.30** Nightstand (88979). **4.00** Close.

GRANADA PLUS
6.00 The Box (6509714). **7.00** The Cuckoo Waltz (5916608). **7.30** Leave It to Charlie (5928443). **8.00** Holding the Fort (8986545). **8.30** The Piglet Files (9316066). **9.00** Gladiators (9746337). **10.00** The Persuaders (5924627). **11.00** El Extreme Close-Up (5929627). **11.30** Jeeves and Wooster (5984337). **12.20** Return of the Saint (1258085). **1.30** Emmerdale (8960207). **4.00** Film: Jekyll and Hyde (1990) (5596795). **6.00** The Persuaders (6153482). **7.00** Hawaii Five-O (7012882). **8.00** Jeeves and Wooster (7021530). **9.00** A Kind of Loving (7016066). **10.00** The Comedians (4366581). **10.30** Stand Up (4566289). **11.00** As Granada Men & Motors (8891996). **2.00** Close.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND
As BBC1 England except: 4.40 Final Score (2307207). **4.55** Northern Ireland Results (2386714). **5.25** Newsline (9364153).

BBC1 SCOTLAND
As BBC1 England except: 12.15 Grandstand from Scotland (9086511). **1.15** Rugby Union (43117714). **2.15** Rugby League (48940559). **2.30** Rugby Union Scotland v New Zealand Maoris. Live coverage from Murrayfield (kick-off 3.00pm), with commentary by Bill Johnstone and John Beattie. A vitally important encounter for the Scots XV as they get ready to prove themselves against a squad that includes no less than seven All Blacks. (42027581). **4.40** Afternoon Sportscene (5421172). **5.25** Reporting Scotland (9364153). **10.30** Sportscene - Match of the Day. Dougie Donnelly introduces highlights of today's football action in Scotland, including St Johnstone v Celtic, and Motherwell v Hearts, plus the very best action from the English Premiership. (89259).

BBC1 WALES
As BBC1 England except: 4.55 Wales on Saturday (2386714). **5.25** Wales on Saturday (7793795).

ANGLIA
As LWT except: 12.30 Off the Wall. Kirk England presents a series taking a look at anything and everything to do with popular culture. In this programme, Rowland Rivron drops in for a chat, and an Essex girl gets a culture shock. (27608). **1.35** Anglia News (5944608). **1.40** Cartoons (5945801). **1.50** Picking the Fruit - the Making of 'Still Crazy'. A behind-the-scenes look at the making of Brit comedy 'Still Crazy', about the reformation of a rock band. The film stars Stephen Rea, Billy Connolly, Timothy Spall and 'Withnail and I' creator Bruce Robinson. (6791262?). **2.20** Going Wild (50434917). **5.00** Anglia News and Sport (8749443). **11.15** MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (675337). **12.45** Film: The Games. Rampaging Erich Segal storylines run away with themselves in readiness for the Rome Olympics, culminating in a thundering good race. Stanley Baker, Michael Crawford, Ryan O'Neal and Charles Aznavour, of all people, take part under Michael Winner's hoofpounding direction. (474009). **2.35** New Baywatch (8750776). **3.40** Ed's Night Party. Ed the Sock hosts his late-night chat show. (21157931). **4.05** Coach (78975196). **4.35** Not Fade Away (4904432).

CENTRAL
As LWT except: 12.30 Premiere. A lively guide to what's on in the Central region, covering music, movies, art and theatre. In this edition, Mike Parker and Vix meet the Lo Fi Allstars and designer Patty Bell. Plus the 14th annual Birmingham film festival, and a facelift for Walsall Gallery. (27608). **1.35** Central News and Weather (5944608). **1.40** Airwolf. Action adventure series about a hi-tech helicopter and its heroic pilot. Jo Santini learns that the man introducing a new top-secret plane is the demanding father she could never please. (1510424). **5.00** Central News, Weather and Goals Extra (8749443). **11.00** News; ; Weather (780627). **4.35** Jobfinder (7834297). **5.00** Spotlight Asia (54115).

HTV WALES
As LWT except: 12.30 Movies, Games and Videos (27608). **1.35** HTV News (5944608). **1.40** Airwolf (1510424). **5.00** HTV Wales News and Sports Results (8749443). **11.15** MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (675337). **12.45** Film: The Games (474009). **2.35** New Baywatch (8750776). **3.40** Ed's Night Party (21157931). **4.05** Coach (78975196). **4.35** Not Fade Away (4904432).

HTV WEST
As HTV Wales except: 12.30 Sportsweek. Matt Arnold presents highlights of the weeks sporting events in the West Country. (27608). **1.40** No Naked Flames. Teenage lifestyle and activity programme aimed at 13- to 17-year-olds. In this programme, Dan and Kylie test their talent at Butlin's. (6791714). **2.10** Warner Brothers Cartoon (17606917).

MERIDIAN
As LWT except: 12.30 Dinosaurs (27608). **1.35** Meridian News and Weather (5944608). **1.40** Airwolf (1510424). **5.00** Meridian News and Weather (8749443). **11.00** News Headlines; National Weather (780627). **11.15** MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (675337). **12.45** Film: The Games (474009). **2.35** New Baywatch (8750776). **3.40** Ed's Night Party (21157931). **4.05** Coach (78975196). **4.35** Not Fade Away (4904432).

WESTCOUNTRY
As LWT except: 12.30 Movies, Games and Videos (27608). **1.35** Westcountry News (5944608). **1.40** Extreme (3557578). **2.15** Cartoon Time (49935627). **5.00** Westcountry News (8749443). **11.15** MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (675337). **12.45** Film: The Games (474009). **2.35** New Baywatch (8750776). **3.40** Ed's Night Party (21157931). **4.05** Coach (78975196). **4.35** Not Fade Away (4904432).

YORKSHIRE
As LWT except: 12.30 Dinosaurs. Germs attack Baby, leading to the invention of a new kind of medicine. (27608). **1.35** Calendar News and Weather (5944608). **5.00** Calendar News (9370714). **5.05** Scoreline (4514424).

TYNE TEES
As Yorkshire except: 1.35 North East News and Weather (5944608). **5.00** North East News and Weather (9370714). **5.05** Full Time (4514424).

S4C
As Channel 4 except: 12.30 Jackie. Relating the story of German Jews in Israel. (30338207). **5.05** Brookside. Jimmy decides to take matters into his own hands. Jacqui agonises over telling Susannah about Max and Faye. (63999856). **7.25** Newyddion (35027288). **7.40** Gwyl Gerdd Dant Cymru 1998. Yr Weddgrug. Live coverage of the 1998 annual festival of traditional Welsh music and dancing. Subsequent programmes are subject to change. (29454004). **4.35** Close.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS
JON SPEELMAN

THE CREAM has been rising to the top in the seventh Monarch Assurance Open in the Isle of Man, as the leaders recover from their various set-backs.

Emil Sutovsky, originally Russian, now Israeli, was the last to surrender a perfect score when he drew with the second seed, Sergei Tiviakov, in round four on Wednesday. Meanwhile Nigel Short had beaten Fridman to take a share of the lead while Ehlvest, Baburin, Rausis, Arkell and Plaskett in today's excellent game, also won.

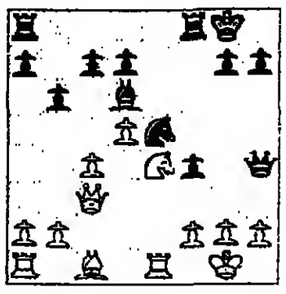
In Thursday's round Sutovsky and Short drew, and are joined in the lead by Tiviakov and Plaskett who both won. There are eight players half a point behind.

Last century the Reverend Owen introduced the Queen's fianchetto opening for Black. This idea, dormant for nearly a century, was taken up again by Tony Miles in the Seventies to forge a family of systems, normally against 1d4, which are now called – at least in this country – the English defence.

There is a fine book by that name, sadly now long out of print, by Keene, Tisdall and Plaskett himself. And I also have been a long-time devotee of the defence, though unfortunately, really well prepared opponents have become somewhat of a liability as theory has threatened to consign the more dubious lines to the scrap heap.

Hanley tried an idea with which Alexander Chernin beat me last year. But Plaskett improved on it with the excellent 7... 0-0, instead of my 7... Ng6?!: not fearing 8 a3 Bd6 9 e5 Be5 10 b4 Bxf3! 11 Qxf3 Bd4 12 Qxa8 Bxa1.

White exchanged off his bishop with 10 Bxf5 to free the d pawn, but after 12... Bxf3! and 13... Nc6 Black already had an ideal position.



I'm sure that in the diagram White was afraid of 17 Nxd6 Ng4 when 18 h3 Qxf2+ 19 Kh1 f3 is curtains. However 18 Ne4 Qxh2+ 19 Kf1 Qh1+ 20 Ke2 Qxg2 21 Qf3! is fine for White; so Black should simply recapture 17 Nxd6 cxd6!.

There are lots of nice variations at the end. Perhaps the prettiest is 23 Bxe7 Rf8! 24 Qd2 Nxe1 25 Qxe1 Rh5 26 Nf2 Qh2+ 27 Kf1 Rhf5 28 Bf4 R5xf4! 29 gxf4 Qh3+ 30 Ke2 Re3+.

White: C Hanley
Black: Jim Plaskett
Isle of Man 1998
English defence

1 c4 b6	16 Ne4 Qh4 (see diagram)
2 Nc3 e6	17 f3? Bb4!
3 e4 Bb7	18 Qxb4 Nd3
4 Nf3 Bb4	19 g3 fxg3
5 Bd3 Ne7	20 hxg3 Qh3
6 Ne2 f5	21 Qe3 Rxf3
7 Ng3 0-0	22 Bf4 Rf8
8 0-0 Bd6	23 Rf1 R8xf4
9 exf5 Nxf5	24 Rxf3 Rxf3
10 Bxf5 exf5	25 Qd2 Qg4
11 Re1 Qf6	26 Qe2 Nf4
12 d4 Bxf3!	27 Qe1 Qh3
13 Qxf3 Nc6	28 Qd2 Re3! 0-1
14 d5 Ne5	
15 Qc3 f4	

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BRIDGE
ALAN HIRON

"I THINK you got that one wrong, partner!" commented West good-humouredly after an unsuccessful defence against South's club game on this deal from match-play.

Love all; dealer North

North
♠4 3 2
♡10 6 2
♢A K 7
♣K J 9 4

West
♠K 10 5
♡K Q J 7 3
♢6 5 2
♣6 3

East
♠J 8 7 6
♡A 9 8 5
♢10 9 8 4
♣8

South
♠A Q 9
♡4
♢Q J 3
♣A Q 10 7 5 2

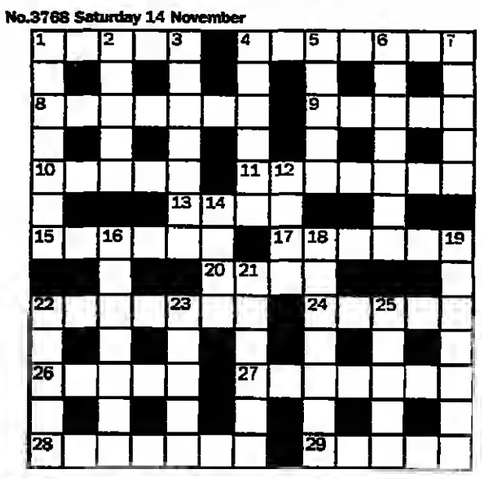
After two passes South opened One Club and West overcalled with One Heart. North suggested a maximum pass and a liking for clubs by bidding Two Hearts, and East raised obstructively to Three Hearts. Still angling for 3 No-trumps, South explored with Three Spades but, with nothing in hearts, North went back to Four Clubs. As his partner could hardly have enough high cards to make a slam possible, South contended himself with Five Clubs. All passed and West led ♡K.

When his king held, West continued with ♡Q. Now the play was easy for a good technician. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps, ruffed dummy's last heart and cashed three diamonds, ending on the table. Then he led a spade, putting in the nine when East played low (it would not have helped East to try the jack, for South merely covers with his queen). West won with his 10 but was end-played – either he led a spade into South's remaining tenace, or conceded a ruff and discard.

West's complaint was that his partner should have foreseen such a development and overtaken ♡K with his ace to return a spade at trick two. Can you see why this did not help? (As capably demonstrated by South at the other table.) Declarer covers the low spade with his nine and this loses to the 10. But now, after ruffing the next heart lead, declarer ran all his trumps and followed with three diamonds, ending in dummy who had retained ♠6 ♡10. West, now in sole control of the hearts, was forced to bare his king of spades, and, bearing in mind West's entry into the bidding, it was not difficult for declarer to play his ace and drop West's ♠K.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3768 Saturday 14 November



ACROSS
1 French painter (5)
4 Scolded (7)
8 Compass direction (7)
9 Play (5)
10 Garden pest (5)
11 Spray (7)
13 Animal fat (4)
15 Access (6)
17 Person owing money (6)
20 Gemstone (4)
22 Drug (7)
24 Distant (5)
26 Farewell (5)
27 Retaining fence (7)
28 Thorough understanding (7)
29 Weird (5)

DOWN
1 Vegetable (7)
2 Attain (5)
3 Play with thumbs (7)
4 Mendicant (6)
5 Direction finding device (5)
6 Passage (7)
7 Slow speech delivery (5)
12 Whirlpool (4)
14 Long period of time (4)
16 Manoeuvres (7)
18 Inspect (7)
19 Displaced person (7)
21 Close at hand (6)
22 Bewitch (5)
23 Question (5)
25 Type of willow (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Pic, 3 Seize (Pisces), 7 Familiar, 8 Loge, 9 Outstretched, 10 Skimpy, 12 Petite, 14 Merchant bank, 18 Limb, 19 Sturgeon, 20 Stem, 21 Oaf. DOWN: 1 Peacock, 2 Edict, 3 Serge, 4 Illicit, 5 Eagle, 6 Wintry, 11 Macabre, 12 Put out, 13 Take-off, 15 Edits, 16 Arson, 17 Aggro.

JASPER REES
TELEVISION REVIEW

UNTIL RECENTLY, gardening programmes made no effort to appeal to non-gardeners. And why should they, when football programmes make no concessions to non-football fans? *Gardener's World* was just what it said it was, and, unless you knew the Latin password, there was no way in.

Garden Doctors (C4), and now Gardening Neighbours (BBC2), have changed all that. Anyone can watch these shows, largely because they have cross-pollinated the standard spectacular *horticulturalist* with other more variegated television genres. Anyone, that is, apart from gardeners, for whom this is kids' stuff. *Garden Doctors* was even set in a playground this week, where the planting was done by children.

Both these programmes are of the "makeover" genre. Some cheery people from television-land parachute in waving a chequebook and tell you how to do up your space. The fact that the space is a garden is of purely nominal relevance. Makeover television is accessible because it has a narrative. It starts with exhibit A and transforms it into exhibit Z. It sometimes even pretends that the transformation can be replicated at home. Though not often, because, unlike in *Changing Rooms*, in gardening programmes "budget" is a dirty word.

There is something rather disingenuous about *Garden Doctors*' inclusive, can-do spirit for just that reason. This week, a schoolyard in Harwich was recast as a beautiful botanical playground. While transfixed with admiration, I kept imagining a caption flashing on my screen: the council would never pay for this. Presenters Paul Thompson and Ann-Marie Powell work frantically on their democratic appeal: the glottal-stop count is a reliable barometer of their enthusiasm. But dropping "Th" would have achieved nothing if it were not bankrolled by several "Ge".

Both programmes listed the ingredients that make up one of those soil cocktails. *Gardening Neighbours* has been made on that sort of formula. For mulch it throws in a buckethead of *Changing Rooms*, mixes that in with a spadeful of *Neighbours from Hell* manure, and, as it's set in a cul-de-sac in Sheffield, tops it off with a fast-action *Full Monty* fertilizer.

The goal is essentially the same as that of *Garden Doctors*, except that the transformation will unfold over several weeks. Despite the title, so far there is no indication that the neighbours will be having anything to do with one another, apart from one polite discussion about the fate of a tree.

My guess is that by the end of the series all eight households will team up to string presenter Diarmuid Gavin from a municipal lamppost; he plays the cheery green-fingered leprechaun just a little too knowingly. Watch this space.

BBC1

7.00 The Munsters (R) (T) (2554085). **7.25** News; Weather (5761849).

7.30 Children's BBC: Terrible Thunderlizards (R) (S) (7367462). **7.40** The Wizard of Oz (R) (S) (2384207). **8.05** Hero Turtles: the Next Mutation (S) (1918337). **8.30** The New Adventures of Superman (R) (S) (T) (8622085). **9.15** Live and Kicking (S) (37448207).

11.00 The Lord Mayor's Show. Barry Davies, slightly incongruously, talks us though the annual procession as Lord Levine is installed as the 671st Lord Mayor (9356065).

12.10 News; Weather (T) (9089240). **12.15** Grandstand (S) (9088511). **12.20** Football Focus (4211801). **1.15** Rugby League (43117714). **1.25** Australian Rally (5198511). **2.00** Insider's Guide to the Olympics (17861085). **2.15** Rugby Union: Wales vs South Africa. Live coverage from Wembley (kick-off at 3pm) (82598559). **4.40** Final Score (5421172).

5.15 News; Weather (T) (4518240). **5.25** Regional News and Weather (9364153). 5.30 'Allo 'Allo (R) (S) (T) (646).

6.00 Jim Davidson's Generation Game. Guests Cannon and Ball run riot alongside an Italian designer who makes a wedding dress, and a pizza acrobatic team (S) (T) (40559).

7.00 Noel's House Party. "My Little Friend", "Sofa Soccer" and other regular slots from the bearded prankster (S) (T) (513379).

7.45 The National Lottery Draw. Emma from *Lakesiders* joins Lesley Garrett to serenade the punters (S) (T) (975191).

8.05 Casualty. Medical drama series. While Sean's future hangs in the balance, George has to weigh up the pros and cons of transferring a child for treatment (S) (T) (727608).

8.55 Airport. Heathrow docu-soap. Jo must find beds for an Albanian family claiming political asylum, while the resident press turn out in the early hours for the return of Louise Woodward from America (S) (T) (837714).

9.25 The X-Files. More paranormal investigations for David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson, although the series has become so convoluted it might put off occasional dabblers. Mulder's life is put at risk when an escaped convict with telekinetic powers seeks revenge on the people who put him behind bars (S) (T) (155288).

10.10 News; Weather (T) (142917).

10.30 Match of the Day. Manchester United play Blackburn Rovers, at Old Trafford, while there's action and/or goals from the rest of the Premiership. Des Lynam is in the hot seat (S) (T) (99269).

12.00 McCoist and McAulay. Loyd Grossman is a guest as the boys hit Kilmarnock (S) (T) (97370).

12.30 Clive Anderson All Talk. Second-sitting chat show with Dave Allen and Harry Enfield brought in for questioning (R) (S) (T) (75660).

1.00 Top of the Pops (S) (T) (8434831).

1.38 Joins BBC News 24 (91410252). To 7am.

BBC2

6.50 FILM Death on the Set. (Leslie S Hiscott 1935 UK). Long-forgotten nonsense with American gangster Henry Kendall trying to pin a murder on his British movie-director lookalike (Kendall again) (9355578).

8.00 Weekend 24 (78545). **8.00** Network East Big Talk (S) (17733). **9.30** O Asia (S) (29056). **10.00** Café 21 (S) (78796). **10.30** Network East (S) (8427207). **11.20** See Hear! (S) (1595714). **12.05** Hot Shots (R) (T) (3780849). **12.16** The Natural World (R) (S) (T) (4238578).

1.05 CHOICE Hell Drivers (Cy Endfield 1957 US). British lorry drivers are the unlikely protagonists in this first-rate thriller. See *Film of the Day*, below (60991085).

2.50 FILM Checkpoint (Ralph Thomas 1957 UK). The second of two Stanley Baker films today is not a particularly interesting example of his work. In a typical piece of casting from his earlier career, Baker plays a heavy – a ruthless motor-racing tycoon involved in a spot of industrial espionage (3984356).

4.10 The Virginian (R) (6942917).

5.25 TOTP 2. George Michael, Duran Duran and Mariah Carey are extracted from the archives (S) (6323998).

6.10 Travels with Pevsner: Worcestershire. Jonathan Meades proves a stern critic of Pevsner, calling him a "writer of lists" and comparing his work to the Ordnance Survey maps (he doesn't mean this as an insult). Meades strides across his native Worcestershire, county of Elgar and AE Housman, and the location of the house that inspired *Brideshead Revisited* (109207).

7.00 News and Sport; Weather (T) (343443).

7.15 Correspondent. "Two Weddings and the Rouble". Just when you thought film-makers had given up making titles out of that film... Tim Whewell chronicles a growing crisis in the provincial Russian town of Yaroslavl', where most people have not received wages or pensions for months (S) (T) (583694).

8.00 What the Papers Say. *Daily Express* columnist Edward Pearce reviews the week's press (S) (265511).

8.10 The Cold War. "Sputnik 1949-60". This episode of the ongoing history of the Cold War is bookended with two Soviet triumphs – the testing of their first atomic bomb in 1948 and Yuri Gagarin becoming the first man to orbit the Earth in April 1961 (S) (T) (748191).

9.00 Have I Got News for You. From last night (R) (S) (T) (5882).

9.30 CHOICE Lesley Garrett – Tonight! The diva performs selected operatic arias and musical numbers. See *Music Programme of the Day*, below (S) (43846).

10.00 Storyville – 444 Days. Leslie Woodhead's documentary tells the story of the 1979 hostage crisis at the American Embassy in Tehran – and the United States' frustrating attempts to free them in the face of Ayatollah Khomeini's revolutionary fervour (S) (T) (541004).

11.45 The Cops. Another chance to see last Monday's episode. Mike's reputation and career are on the line (S) (T) (312827).

12.35 World Music Night. Highlights from the World Music Night staged in Maastricht in the Netherlands. Featuring Cape Verdean singer Ceseria Evora, percussionist Trilok Gurtu and steel band Phase II Pan Groove (Followed by *Weatherview*) (S) (849485). To 2.10am.

ITV Carlton

6.00 GMTV (9032207).

8.25 SMTV Live (S) (12044207). **11.30** CD UK (S) (28443). **12.30** N-v-S (27608). **1.00** On the Ball (T) (68022). **1.30** ITN News; Weather (T) (59442337). **1.35** London Weekend Today (T) (59441808). **1.40** Bugs Bunny (67925191). **2.05** Picking the Fruit – the Making of "Still Crazy" (70857375).

2.30 Rugby 98 Live: England vs Netherlands. Live coverage from Huddersfield (kick-off 3pm) of England's opening game in their bid to qualify for next year's World Cup finals in Wales (59003376).

4.45 ITN News; Sports Results; Weather (T) (2391846). **5.00** London Weekend Tonight (T) (8749443). **5.15** MTV Europe Music Awards 98 (953172).

5.46 Gladiators. More competitive assault-course antics for the mythically-named body-builders and members of the public. Ulrika Jonsson and Jeremy Guscott do the honours (S) (T) (743917).

6.46 The Blind Date Exclusive. Cilla Black catches up with some of last year's contestants – and finds a lot of tangential success (old boyfriends getting in touch, viewers making proposals, that sort of thing). It obviously pays to advertise (S) (T) (734269).

7.45 A Royal Celebration. John F Kennedy had Marilyn Monroe singing "Happy Birthday" to him; Prince Charles gets Geri Halliwell, the former Ginger Spice. Doesn't he know it's All Saints who are in this year? This gala concert was held at the end of last month, and the stars performing in front of the 50-year-old Prinnie and his companions include Rowan Atkinson, Stephen Fry, the afore-mentioned Geri Halliwell, Barry Humphries, Spike Milligan, Luciano Pavarotti, Miss Piggy, Robbie Williams, Sir Peter Ustinov and Robin Williams (S) (T) (4759789).

10.00 Meet the In-Laws. No longer called *In-laws from Hell*, but you get the idea. This documentary about the delicate relationships between families thrown together by marriage features stories ranging from mild interference to, in one case, a solicitor subjected to physical abuse from his wife's mother (S) (T) (6808).

11.00 News; Weather; Lottery Result (T) (780627).

11.15 MTV Europe Music Awards 98. From Milan, with Madonna, Robbie Williams, REM etc (855795).

12.50 FILM Chine O'Brien (Robert Clouse 1988 US). A Utah policewoman with martial-arts skills decides to leave the force after killing a 13-year-old boy in an alley fight. Someone called Cynthia Rothrock "stars" (857405).

2.25 Baywatch Nights (2808316). **3.18** Box Office America (52898776). **3.40** CD UK (3291776). **4.35** Night Shift (15926283). **4.40** ITV Nightscreen (2462955). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

6.00 T4 (35375). **7.00** Madeline (R) (2547795). **7.25** Animal Alphabet (5754559). **7.30** The Magic School Bus (28288). **8.00** Biker Mice from Mars (R) (29578). **8.30** The Vibe (T) (28846). **9.00** Morning Line (S) (68733). **10.00** Gazzetta Football Italia (R) (T) (17172). **11.00** Transworld Sport (T) (98068). **12.00** No Balls Allowed (99337). **12.30** Ramayana – a Journey (T) (58578). **1.00** The Ocean World of John Stoneman (T) (6102714).

1.35 Channel 4 Racing from Ayr and Cheltenham. Brough Scott introduces the 1.45 and 3.45 from Ayr, and the 2.20, 2.55, 3.30 and 3.45 from Cheltenham (S) (48188207).

4.36 The Monkees (T) (9183004).

5.05 Brookside Omnibus. Nearly two and a half hours of Mersey grief – or a good 15 minutes longer than *Gone with the Wind* – this is quite an investment in time and concentration. The storylines twisting round each other from this week's five-night special include Jimmy's attempts to get even with Little Jimmy's killer, and that Max Fernham love triangle (he's recently been outed for conducting a 20-year affair with Faye, much to everyone's surprise – the scriptwriters' too, one presumes) (R) (S) (T) (90597820).

7.30 Right to Reply. Roger Bolton airs viewers' complaints. Tonight, why people find on-screen logos annoying, and whether a Rory Bremner sketch about the Royal Family was offensive. Hm (T) (733).

8.00 Booked. David Aaronovitch, Nigella Lawson, Simon Callow and Rhona Cameron discuss *Love Undetectable* by Andrew Sullivan and interview travel writer Bill Bryson (who is dubbed "banal" by Jonathan Meades in tonight's *Travels with Pevsner*, by the way) (T) (287117).

8.40 Bob's Birthday. Oscar-winning animation about a dentist's mid-life crisis (R) (S) (992153).

9.00 CHOICE The Real... Diane Fossey. The heroine of *Gorillas in the Mist* revealed. See *Documentary of the Day*, below (T) (9191).

10.00 Drop the Dead Donkey. Topical newsroom comedy – although not as topical as it might have been last Wednesday. Helen wrestles with her sexuality (90066).

10.30 Is It Legal? Solicitor sitcom; not terribly funny. A huge gothic desk is delivered to Bob (S) (T) (633337).

11.05 Eurotrash (T) (576066). **11.40** Young Person's Guide to Becoming a Rock Star (T) (679424). **12.20** Dark Skies (R) (S) (T) (328196). **2.05** NYPD Blue (R) (S) (T) (2886196). **2.55** Hill Street Blues (R) (S) (T) (9445641). **3.45** St Elsewhere (R) (2104554). **4.35** Future Quest (R) (S) (T) (97297592). **5.05** Hangin' with Mr Cooper (R) (S) (T) (9093270). **5.30** Gumdrop (5888486). **5.35** Droopy (4931660). **5.55** Dumb and Dumber (4917080). To 6.20am.

Channel 5

6.00 Dingledown Farm (R) (1844269). **6.30** Havakazoo (R) (S) (3184733). **7.00** 5 News and Sport (S) (6508849). **7.30** Milkshake! (S) (9260761). **7.35** Wimzie's House (R) (S) (1012085). **8.00** Lassie (S) (2905627). **8.30** Wishbone (R) (S) (2904998). **9.00** The Enid Blyton Secret Series (9613240). **9.35** The Incredible Hulk (135153). **10.30** Loggerheads (S) (2917462). **11.00** The Pepsi Chart (R) (S) (T) (6904882). **11.30** Singled Out (S) (8905511). **12.00** Togs Special (2906714). **12.30** The Mag (S) (8846760). **1.50** 5 News (S) (T) (60270511). **2.00** Blast (S) (6153066).

2.30 Sportsweek on 5. Gorgeous, pouting Gail McKenna fronts another edition of this eclectic (whatever they can get their hands on, basically) sports magazine – featuring Dutch and Brazilian soccer and US ice hockey from the game between Phoenix Coyotes and Dallas Stars (S) (6576849).

3.30 Sunset Beach Omnibus. Michael learns that he is sterile (R) (S) (T) (12378576).

5.55 5 News and Sport (S) (T) (1054559).

6.00 Hercules – the Legendary Journeys. Iolaus receives an urgent message from Hector saying that Orestes, who is Iolaus's cousin and identical lookalike, and his wife Niobe have come up with a plan to form a League of Nations. Whatever (4167627).

6.55 Night Fever. Suggs's girls karaoke guests are Daniella Westbrook, Bear Van Beers, Katie Puckrick, Cleo Rocos and Sophia Lawrence. The "boys" are Tony Blackburn, John Virgo, Jonathan Morris, Russel Floyd and Mark Foster (S) (2416172).

7.45 8 News and Sport (S) (T) (9448849).

8.05 Xena – Warrior Princess. Campy mix-and-match mythology. The ever-opportunistic Salmoneus urgently summons Xena and Gabrielle to ask for help in keeping the peace in the kingdom where he is organising the Miss Known World Beauty Pageant (5084511).

9.00 FILM Nightscream (Noel Nosseck 1997 Can). What is Teri Garr doing washed up in third-rate horror like this? She plays the mother of a dead teenage girl whose grief is reactivated when a stranger arrives in town claiming to be possessed by the dead girl's spirit (S) (T) (52929284).

10.40 FILM Tiger Heart (Georgs Chemchoun 1995 US). *Karate Kid* rip-off with TJ Roberts as the teenage martial-arts maestro taking on school bullies and wicked developers (T) (61783172).

12.20 FILM Heads (Paul Shapiro 1993 Can). Satirical comedy about a small town experiencing decapitations (8560009).

2.10 FILM Black Joy (Anthony Simmons 1977 UK). Rough-and-ready comedy of a Guyanese adapting to life in Brixton (9193844). To 3.55am.

TELEVISION GUIDE BY GERARD GILBERT

MUSIC PROGRAMME OF THE DAY

LESLEY GARRETT TONIGHT (9.30pm BBC2, *right*) There's something very old-fashioned about this new showcase for soprano Lesley Garrett – it comes across as a sort of operatic *Perry Como Show*. No doubt it will be laughed off the screen by musical purists, with its medley of classical and show songs, and its determinedly populist choice of guests. Tonight, it's former Take That songwriter Gary Barlowe, looking rather sweet in a pair of reading specs as he accompanies Garrett on his own arrangement of *So Deep is the Night*, based on Chopin's *Tristesse*. The other guest is baritone Bryn Terfel; he and Garrett make their way through Verdi, Mozart and Gershwin.

DOCUMENTARY OF THE DAY

THE REAL... DIANE FOSSEY (9pm C4, *right*) As opposed to the one played by Sigourney Weaver in *Gorillas in the Mist*, one assumes. The real Diane Fossey was the unloved, six-foot daughter of well-to-do Californians, who was introduced to the Mountain Gorillas that were to become her life's work while on a safari in the Congo. Sponsored by the *National Geographic*, the untrained Fossey set up camp in Rwanda – and Jane Maria Franklyn's film documents the doomed love affair with married photographer Bob Campbell (played in the movie by Bryan Brown) and the increasingly unscientific absorption with the apes that finally cost her her life.

FILM OF THE DAY

HELL DRIVERS (1.05pm BBC2, *right*) David Thomson rates Stanley Baker as one of Britain's most important screen actors. "He has not yet been equalled – least of all by Michael Caine," he writes. Thomson contrasts his contemptuousness and working-class aggression with the likes of James Mason, Stewart Granger, Dirk Bogarde and the theatrical knights, noting that he was popular with American directors. Cy Endfield was an American director, albeit black-listed and working in Britain, and *Hell Drivers* is his fascinating attempt to bring an American thriller style to a British subject – haulage contractors pushing their drivers too far.

THE INDEPENDENT

Saturday 14 November 1998

YOUR MONEY

HOW TO MAKE IT • HOW TO SPEND IT

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Save the savings clubs

The demise of supermarket Christmas schemes is a blow for the less well-off. By Paul Slade

Supermarket bank accounts and loyalty cards have all but wiped out the special Christmas savings schemes which many low-income shoppers rely on. Of the UK's five leading supermarket chains, only Sainsbury's and the Co-op offer Christmas schemes – and the Sainsbury's one may not last very long.

Sainsbury's Christmas Saver Account boosts its normal 3.25 per cent interest rate to 6.25 per cent for sums paid in by the end of October and not withdrawn again till December. The Co-op plan adds a £2 bonus to every completed £38 card of saver stamps redeemed against goods in December.

Janice Allen, at the National Consumer Council, believes year-round supermarket savings accounts are no substitute: "Christmas schemes are a way of disciplining yourself when you have very little leeway in your budget. We would be very concerned if these schemes were to disappear completely, because they offer the less well-off an option which they value highly."

David Noble, Sainsbury's Bank marketing director, says: "The whole image of saving for Christmas is more strongly attached to people who are older, who have less interest in credit than the younger age-group."

Nevertheless, Sainsbury's is considering dropping its Christmas Saver Account from next year onwards, because very few people use it. As the chain's instant-access account offers a slightly better interest rate – 6.75 per cent – with no restrictions on withdrawals, most Sainsbury's shoppers naturally enough pick the better-paying and more flexible option.

But for savers putting away the bare minimum, the practical difference between the two accounts is negligible.

Making 12 monthly payments of £10 each into the Christmas Saver Account, making sure you qualify for your bonus, would earn you interest of £4.02. The same investment in the instant-access account would earn you just 24p extra.

For some, it is the very inflexibility of Christmas savings plans which makes them worthwhile. They discourage you from taking your money out early, as that means you would lose out.

Last month's Personal Investment Authority report on low-income savers says: "The additional expenditure incurred at Christmas is hard to accommodate on a low income.

"Christmas clubs and supermarket savings-stamps were used to save up for additional food. [This] was attractive as it offered putting away money as part of a routine and it was seen as savings that were ring-fenced".

Asda offers a similar scheme to the Co-op's, this time adding a £2 bonus to every £48 saver card redeemed between 9 November and 31 December.

About 678,000 Asda shoppers, over 10 per cent of the store's customer base, use this scheme. Mark Williamson, a spokesman for Asda, says: "A significant proportion of our customers like this way of saving and like the scheme, which is why we've kept it and will continue to do so."

Mr Noble accepts it is partly the concentration of resources on newer initiatives such as loyalty cards that explains the slow demise of Christmas savings schemes for the poor.

He adds: "You will find that in the period from the end of November to just before Christmas, you see an increase in redemptions."

Other chains, such as Somerfield, offer savings-stamps schemes which are not specifically tied to Christmas, but where redemptions do hit a peak at around that time of year. Over 90 per cent of Somerfield savings stamps are redeemed in November, December or January.

Pete Williams, a spokesman for Somerfield, says: "It is all geared around Christmas. But we don't feel anyone should be penalised if they fill up the stamps card and then, for whatever reason, don't use it at Christmas. Other cultures have other things to save for."

Christmas saver schemes were a boon for many low-income families *Topham*

BARGAIN HUNTER

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

With a little imagination ...

SINGLEDGE HOUSE, near Dover in Kent, was built in 1906 as an engine shed, so lacks refinements like bedrooms, bathrooms or a kitchen. Described as "an exciting opportunity" by agents Cluttons Daniel Smith, it would require considerable sums to turn it into a home. An award-winning architect, Lorcan O'Herlihy, has plans which allow for a glass structure to be built within the walls and includes an internal garden. The building will also need new roof and windows. All for £115,000. For details, ring 01227 457441.

ROSALIND RUSSELL

CAR OF THE WEEK

Have a supermini Christmas

IN THIS increasingly difficult economic climate and with the traditional pre-Yuletide slide, buyers have to be tempted into car showrooms. So D C Cook is offering an excellent "driveaway" package on S-registered, delivery mileage, Citroën Saxo Super Sprints. These special-edition examples have a driver's airbag and alloy wheels, and, at £6,995, represent a £2,000 saving on the list price. Not only that, D C Cook is throwing in two years' free insurance. You might even be able to link it to its 0 per cent finance offer. Call on 01226 2066657, or visit a showroom near you.

JAMES RUPPERT

DEAL OF THE WEEK

Anything you can do

One of the "advantages" of writing Deal of the Week is that if you feature one product and a cheaper exists, you will soon hear about it. In September, I said one provider offered "bargain" travel cover. Enter Primary Direct, another travel insurer. Its cover starts at £12 for a single person in Europe and £25 worldwide over 17 days, or £25 and £50 for a family with an unlimited number of children. Call 0990 775885 for annual cover, otherwise call 0990 133218.

NIC CICUTTI

Where there's a will, there's a free, easy way

It's important to make a will, and this month solicitors are offering to do it for no charge. By Abigail Montrose

WRITING A will may not be top of your list of priorities but it is one of those essential things you should do. And now is the ideal time to do it as November is Will Aid month, when more than 2,000 firms of solicitors will be offering their services free to anyone wanting a simple will.

Normally this would cost you a minimum of £50. But instead of charging this fee, solicitors taking part in the scheme will suggest you make a donation to Will Aid, which supports a range of charities. The suggested donation is £40, or £60 for a couple making mirror wills.

It is easy to put off making a will. But if you die without one, there is no guarantee that the people you want to leave your money or possessions to will get them. A common misconception, for example, is that your spouse will automatically inherit your estate if you die without leaving a will. But in fact, your spouse would only be entitled to the first £125,000 of your estate, plus half the remainder, with the other half being split between your children or family.

Unmarried couples can have even more problems, warns Charles Gordon, partner at Farnborough-based solicitors Foster Savage & Gordon. "It is important that unmarried couples living together make wills; otherwise if one dies the family gets all the assets and not their partner," he says.

So if you live with your partner in their home and they die without having made provision for you in their will, you could find yourself homeless as well as bereaved.

If you divorce your spouse, this will not automatically cancel any existing will leaving everything to them. And if you are separated but not divorced and have not made a new will, your spouse will still have a legal claim to inherit.

When it comes to drawing up a will, most people should see a solicitor, says Abigail Bennett, spokeswoman for the charity Age Concern. "It's a very complicated area. If you do draw up your own will, you have to be very careful. Even if you are planning a simple will we think it's best to go to a solicitor," she says.

As well as drawing up your will, a solicitor can point out any possible areas of conflict and if necessary offer advice on inheritance-tax planning.

Most people are best off seeking professional help, says Charles Gordon: "If your will is properly organised you won't need to go back every year."

If you do decide to draw up your own will, there are a number of common pitfalls you should avoid, advises Mr Gordon. Ensure your will is properly signed, witnessed and dated. If you are leaving your whole estate to one person, ensure you cover the possibility of them dying before you. Cover your whole estate – often people dispose of their home and life assurance, but forget their car and the house contents. And remember to appoint an executor to carry out the terms of your will.

For solicitors in your area taking part in the Will Aid campaign, call 0870 6060239. Age Concern offers a free guide, 'Making Your Will' – call 0800 009966

WEIRD WILLS

ADULTS WHO died in England and Wales in 1995: 559,237. Adults who leave estates of more than £5,000, with no will: 50,104. Eighty per cent with estates of less than £5,000 leave no will. More women are victims of intestacy than are divorced.

The shortest contested will: Frederick Charles William Thorn wrote "All for Mother" on an envelope. This was contested as meaning "Wife". The challenge was upheld.

The longest will: Frederica Evelyn Sitwell Cook, 95,940 words, in 1925.

Source: NCH Action for Children

INSIDE

NIC CICUTTI

Of two products of equal worth, the one likely to be recommended is the one paying higher commission to the IFA

ARE WE about to see the end of truly independent financial advice? The Office of Fair Trading is preparing a report on the question of "polarisation". This is a rule which forces insurance salespeople either to sell the products of just one financial provider, or to become fully independent, able to recommend any policy.

The OFT is believed to be hostile to polarisation, arguing that it has failed consumers and that a different system, called "multi-ties", would be a much better option.

Under the multi-tie system, salespeople would not be restricted to just one company's products, thereby making much of what they have to say worthless. They could select up to half a dozen firms on the basis of whether each one has something of value for their clients.

Independent financial advisers are arguing that this half-way house is not true independence. Consumer choice would be restricted to a handful of companies and their products, leading to a situation where the size of commission paid by the provider might determine whether the salesman decides to link up with it.

All of this is true. Except that the criticisms of multi-ties mirror the behaviour exhibited by many self-styled independent financial advisers themselves. All too often IFAs operate through a limited cartel of companies. If an IFA is a member of a "network", an organisation which handles admin work, carries out research and deals with financial watchdogs in return for a slice of that IFA's income, any advice is usually based on a tightly-circumscribed list of providers. The reality is that, as often as not, it is also based on the amount of commission negotiated by the network. Put bluntly, of two products of equal worth to a client, the one most likely to make it on an advice panel is the one paying better commission.

I firmly believe in the value of independent financial advice. Had you asked me two or three years ago whether I was in favour of keeping IFAs and salespeople completely separate in terms of how they operate, I would have said yes. Today, I'm not so sure.

IFAs have allowed their role to become blurred. If they want to defend their current position they will have to try much harder than they are at the present.

A PHONE call from one of our regular property writers, Ginetta Vedrickas. She tells me that the Government has scrapped plans to abolish DIYSO, a shared ownership scheme which has allowed housing associations to help thousands of would-be home-buyers who don't earn enough to take out a full mortgage.

According to Notting Hill Housing Association, the Government's decision to reprieve DIYSO for at least two years follows a recent article on this subject written by Ginetta for *The Independent*, among others that have also appeared in specialist publications.

This is excellent news, capping a week of accolades for our property section. Both Ginetta and Fiona Brandhorst, another colleague, were both commended for their work in the recent Halifax/Laing Homes awards. Fiona even walked off with one of the section categories. My congratulations to them both. And, indirectly, to you: the views of readers of *The Independent* count, or so it would appear from this story.

Early birds plan retirement

FINANCIAL MAKEOVER

NAMES SALLY and MICHAEL CORCORAN
AGES 36 and 37
OCCUPATIONS PRESS OFFICER and ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

SALLY AND Michael are newly-weds. They earn £19,700 and £19,500 respectively, and currently have a disposable income of £750 per month. Sally recently sold her property and used the proceeds to redeem the mortgage on Michael's house where they now live.

She pays £50 a month to a Perpetual PEP (on last valuation worth over £18,000), while he contributes £46 per month to a Scottish Mutual low-cost endowment plan. Sally has £3,000 with a building society and Michael has stocks and shares worth £2,000. They will move house next spring, but are unsure whether to sell or let Michael's property, now mortgage free. In addition they both wish to retire early and, although they both see their long-term future with their current employers, neither wishes to work until 60.

Mike and Sally are looking to retire early and want to build a secure future — *Steve Forrest/Guzelian*

The adviser: Paul Hegarty, principal of Sett Financial Management, independent financial advisers: 190 Leeds Road, Kippax, Leeds (0113 287 4832). A member of DBS Financial Management, a network for IFAs.

The advice: Sally and Michael are considering letting their current property. Michael feels rental income of £350 per month is achievable. The property's current value of £37,000 is £500 less than when originally purchased.

First, rental income will be taxable but with the ability to offset costs of wear and tear. On eventual disposal of the let property, special Capital Gains Tax (CGT) rules apply.

Where a let property was previously the owners' main family home, up to £40,000 of gains can be exempted. Each spouse can claim the exemption, so transferring ownership to joint names may be necessary in future years.

Second, they need to consider how they would manage financially if the property were unoccupied for a period. If they decide to let Michael's property they will need to borrow perhaps £30,000 more than would have otherwise been the case. Whilst 100 per cent mortgages are available, I recommend that they find a deposit of at least 10 per cent of the intended purchase price of £90,000.

The deposit, stamp duty and other costs could be provided by considering encashing part of Sally's PEP, her building society account, selling Michael's shares and saving their disposable income in a high interest account.

Borrowing 90 per cent avoids the need (with most lenders) to pay an indemnity premium, which could be up to £2,700 based on a 100 per cent loan. Indemnity premiums are one of the costs of high loan-to-value borrowing. Most lenders also have better mortgage deals for those borrowing 90 per cent or less. Capped rates represent good value with lower initial payments and the ability to benefit when rates fall.

But beware of any penalties that overhang the capped period, as these restrict the possibilities of re-mortgaging or negotiating further advantageous rates.

Worryingly, Michael was told by a building society that he couldn't use his current endowment policy in conjunction with a future mortgage. This, of course, is untrue. Sally's PEP can also be incorporated as a repayment vehicle.

Sally's monthly contribution to her PEP will cease from next April when Individual Savings Accounts are introduced. Perpetual will contact her to invite her to continue contributions to an ISA. Michael's endowment matures in 14 years time and arranging the new loan over this period, while costing more, will help Michael and Sally accomplish their aim of retiring early.

Sally and Michael both belong to their employers' pension schemes. A full description of Michael's scheme was not available at the time of our meeting and his options cannot therefore be discussed in detail. Both schemes provide life cover of three times salary for Michael and one times salary for Sally.

Sally wants to know what benefits she can expect. As a local authority employee, her pension will be based on the number of years service she completes and her final salary at retirement. If she works for 40 years (the maximum achievable) she will receive half her final salary as pension. She will also receive a lump sum worth 3/80ths of her earnings for each year of service. So, again, 40 years service means 120/80ths, or 1.5 times final salary as a tax-free lump sum in addition to her pension.

If Sally worked to 65, she would have 32 years service. But she wishes to retire before age 60 and pays Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) via Equitable Life to the Local Authority scheme, to boost pension provision. The pension that can be achieved depends upon investment performance and annuity rates at retirement. Crucially this will not enable Sally to retire early. Benefits can only be taken at the same time as her main scheme, which is normally 65. The earliest she could retire is 60 and provided 25 years service has been completed benefits will be penalty free.

This is one instance where a Free Standing Additional Voluntary Contribution scheme (FSAVC) can also be recommended in addition to her in house AVC. As the name suggests they are separate from the employers scheme and are mainly provided by insurance companies.

Provided Sally leaves service, she can take benefits from age 50. Contributions are subject to an overall limit of 15 per cent of salary and while premiums attract tax relief benefits may be taxable. The income provided will be a small proportion of her pension at normal retirement, but coupled with the shortened term on the new mortgage may give her the option she requires. Saving for retirement via an ISA should also be considered. All proceeds will be tax-free and can be used to provide a tax-efficient income.

As our couple has such a large amount of disposable income to invest normally, PEPs and Tessas would be an obvious choice. However, with their situation in a state of flux, a high interest account could best suit their present circumstances. Sally should also switch her building society monies to an account with Safeways, currently paying 7.55 per cent gross.

The going gets tough for gazumpers

Losing a house last minute to a higher bidder is a heart-breaking experience – and one the Government is keen to eradicate. By **Ginetta Vedrickas**

Victim Christine — *Tom Craig*

"I DIDN'T have his phone number, so I turned up with both children crying on his doorstep," says Christine Edmans. An extract from a novel about a woman scorned? No, just a tale of one desperate purchaser's attempts to track down a vendor who had succumbed to that pernicious practice, gazumping.

Last week the Government announced measures to curb both gazumping and the historic rule, *caveat emptor* – let the buyer beware – but for Ms Edmans the moves come too late. Desperation prompted her journey from London to Colchester, Essex, where she begged the vendor to honour his acceptance of her offer on a three-bedroom 1930s house in south London.

Ms Edmans was particularly anxious to complete having previously lost a purchase to a gazumper. On principle she had refused to match the higher offer and, unable to further stall the sale of her flat, moved temporarily into expensive rented accommodation and put her furniture into storage.

The legal process was smooth until the agent's fateful call: "He said that a barrister was interested in the property despite having been told it was no longer for sale. He threatened to make life hell until they relented and let him view." The bumptious barrister subsequently made an offer which Ms Edmans matched, by now her principles "having flown out of the window". His next bid, £15,000 more, which she could not equal, led to her hunt for the out-of-town vendor.

An eventual confrontation confirmed Ms Edmans' fears: "He was shocked to see a snivelling woman on his doorstep but said £15,000 was too much to refuse." Dejected, she returned to London to house-hunt for a third time, but the experience took its toll: "I was very, very depressed having lost £2,000 in legal fees and with rent and furniture storage costing thousands more."

Last year, Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, commissioned a study examining 1,200 sales and purchases in England and Wales and a further sample in Scotland. The study confirmed the British system of housebuying as the cheapest but slowest of 10 countries surveyed, a practice which results in frustration and stress for vendors and buyers. The latest proposals include making house sellers responsible for surveys and searches which the Government hopes will speed up the process and minimise opportunity for gazumping.

The Government says it cannot tackle gazumping directly because sellers will always find ways of accepting higher offers – but some experts perceive flaws in the recent recommendations. A National Consumer Council spokesperson cautions: "We would like to see a pilot scheme to assess practical hitches before it goes nation-wide. After all, will buyers trust surveys produced by vendors?"

Other critics argue that this new system will be costly for vendors and these costs will be passed on to purchasers, in particular first-time buyers and those at the bottom end of the market.

Simon Tyler of Chase de Vere Mortgages believes surveyors will be more cautious as a result of the plans. He also believes quickening the buying process could result in hasty decisions with negative financial implications and that a reasonable time period lets most buyers make the complex arrangements associated with moving.

Buyers unable to wait for Government initiatives to take effect can now take matters into their own hands and partially protect themselves against the financial implications of gazumping. For a one-off fee of £30, Lambeth Building Society offers an insurance policy which gives cover of up to £300 for wasted legal and survey fees. Legal & General offers a similar policy, aimed at helping both the victims of gazumpers and gazunderers, where prospective buyers pull out at the last minute.

Sadly, Ms Edmans was gazumped a third time before finally succeeding, on her fourth attempt, in buying a three-bedroom house in Dulwich. She welcomes moves to ensure other buyers avoid similar torment but would rather see legislative redress: "People are greedy, it's human nature, but vendors should be bound to accept offers and face financial penalties if they renege."

National Consumer Council: 0171 730 3469; National Association of Estate Agents: 01926 496 800; Lambeth Building Society: 0171 928 1331

Where are the cartoon characters?

Political cartoons seem to have lost the edge that once made such a potent weapon for press and public. By John Windsor

Chris Riddell's censoring bull at the 'Great Challenge'

Too many political cartoonists chasing too few ideas leads to inflation. Inflation of the cartoonists' egos, that is. They invest too much value in too few visual symbols that have changed hands too many times – battered doves, stags at bay, skeletons, barbed wire, gun barrels, manacles, jackboots, zipped-up mouths, the world as a bomb and the sands of time running out. The result is the pompous, mirthless political cartoons that have been appearing on the editorial pages of British newspapers for the past couple of decades.

Political cartooning has become as heavy and boring as politics itself. Stuffed shirts drawing cartoons about stuffed shirts. Michael Foot opened the selling exhibition of the late *Daily Express* cartoonist Michael Cummings. He bought the Cummings cartoons that purported to pillory him – as have many other politicians. If they had really hurt Mr Foot, he would have run a mile. But politicians know they have arrived when a cartoonist acknowledges them.

Political cartoonists have cosied up to politicians in the same way that they have cosied up to restaurants that give them free dinners in return for depicting their shopfronts. It's a living. Question: why should collectors spend their money on cartoonists' original artwork that has submerged its ability to insult and ridicule in safe, tired images that appeal only to politicians' wallets? Answer: see whether British political cartoonists' latest attempt to absorb fresh ideas from the rest of the world comes to anything.

The attempt is called *The Great Challenge*. It is the second International Political Cartoon Exhibition, the first having been held way back in 1958. It opens on 20 November, at the Oxo Tower Wharf on the South Bank, London. Forty years is a long time. The first *Great Challenge* was organised by two Eastern European journalists, the late Josef Josten and his friend Ion Ratiu. Josten had fled from the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia, in 1948, to London, where he founded a radical news agency specialising in affairs behind the Iron Curtain. Ratiu supplied it with news from Romania.

The thousands of "Great Challenge" cartoons that flooded into their offices from throughout the world were in response to an appeal of theirs prompted by a statement by the Hungarian Minister of State, Gyorgi Marosan, in 1957, after the Russians had crushed the Hungarian uprising. Marosan said: "We can, of course, use jokes and satire against hostile and reactionary views, but we will not tolerate jokes against Socialism."

It was a red rag to a cartoonists' symbolic bull. Except that cartoonists from abroad showed that they could produce captionless at-a-glance visual gags 10 times more powerful than the British cartoonists' efforts, weighed down with ponderous labels and corny symbols such as bulls and cart-horses. A Russian, Josef Partykiewicz, submitted a slick two-frame cartoon showing *Liberalisation* – a fat Communist party official approving decorative wrought-iron prison bars instead of plain ones.

To give him his due, Cummings – a friend of Josten and Ratiu – submitted a brilliant cartoon, totally devoid of his usual characteristic labels, entitled *Arms Race*. This showed a wheelchair flying the American flag racing against a missile bearing the Soviet hammer and sickle.

What did British political cartoonists learn from the *Great Challenge*? Not much. The exhibition could have fostered closer links with Eastern European masters of the stunning, surrealistic, captionless political drawing. British cartoonists could have liberated themselves from their cloying literary tradition and adopted a purely visual one. But they preferred instead to keep in touch with contemporary American and Canadian one-line gaggers. At least it was a move in the right direction.

> *Unless they can climb out of their mire of fatuous labels and clichéd symbols, their work will not be worth buying*

What has the latest *Great Challenge* to offer? I have to report that the British organisers' contribution is pretty corny. The exhibition's logo is an angry-faced globe fencing with a pen. Well, Gillray did the globe thing in 1805, when he drew William Pitt and Napoleon carving it up together. Does this paucity of fresh symbols signal the inevitable decline of fine political cartooning?

Then there is the exhibition's promotional postcard with an uncredited cartoon showing a radio announcer with lips sewn up with wire from his microphone. It's those gagged lips again. Censorship is one of the themes of the *Second Great Challenge*. But radio announcers have never been mute, even under dictatorships. Who or what is the artist pillorying? Repressive microphones?

Chris Riddell of *The Observer* has drawn a fairy armed with a paintbrush circling a bull wielding a bludgeon labelled "censorship". Meticulously drawn but conceptually feeble. Sorry. At least the censorship theme has thrown up one new symbol – speech bubbles. Patrick Blower, the *Evening Standard*'s young cartoonist – well, 39 is young in this game – has submitted a three-frame cartoon showing the spiky end of a speech bubble containing Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, being used to impale a man who uttered it. Blower decorously concedes that Miet, a cartoonist, has conveyed the same coocept more concisely using a blank speech bubble and just two frames.

But the winner of the speech bubble cootest must be the Italian cartoonist and sculptor, Marilena Nardi, who submitted an utterly simple cartoon of a speech bubble in the form of a hot-air balloon. There is no caption, but you just know that the man sitting in the balloon's basket must surely be a politician.

Look out for effortlessly flip, surreal, captionless cartoons that make an instant visual impact. They are the future of political cartooning.

There is growing investment confidence in cartoons at the institutional level – a £5m British Cartoon Centre, close to the British Museum, will shortly be announced – but unless British political cartoonists can climb out of their mire of fatuous labels and ponderous, clichéd symbols, their work will not be worth buying.

As it happens, the market has been kind to them. Prices are steadily rising. Blower's cartoons sell for £300, Riddell's sell for £200. The late David Low, of carthorse and Colonel Blimp fame, who consistently satirised the appeasers Baldwin and Chamberlain, and chronicled the fearful Fifties, sells for at least £500 – and up to £900 if his work depicts leaders such as Churchill participating in historical events. Vicky, the late Victor Weisz, is priced £350-£400, but his SuperMac is worth £700-£800.

'The Great Challenge', Ground Floor, Oxo Tower Wharf, Bargehouse Street, South Bank, London SE1, 20 November to 23 December: some cartoons are for sale (0171-401 2255).
Cartoon dealers: Rae-Smith Gallery, 8 Cecil Court, London WC2 (0171-836 7424). London Cartoon Gallery, 44 Museum Street, London WC1 (0171-242 5335). Jack Duncan (01904-641389)

LOOSE CHANGE

AGE CONCERN has produced a new guide to bereavement. The booklet, *A Practical Guide to Coping with Bereavement*, explores the practical and emotional issues of coping with death. Call 0800 387718 for a copy, or write to: Age Concern, Freepost SEA 3369, London SE21 8BR.

BRITANNIA INTERNATIONAL, the offshore arm of Britannia Building Society, is launching a 30-day Notice Account, paying tapered rates of up to 7.45 per cent gross, guaranteed until 29 January 1999. Rates begin at 4.5 per cent on deposits between £1,000 and £2,500, with the highest rate on sums above £25,000. Annual and monthly rate options are available. Call 01624 681100.

BARCLAYS IS launching two healthcare products. The Personal Accident Plan offers a lump sum in the event of a person suffering certain accidents. Two levels of cover are available: standard and premier, with premiums starting at 17 pence a day. There is also a Hospital Cash Plan, paying benefits for each 24-hour period spent as an in-patient in hospital. Details from all branches.

CAPITAL BANK is launching a buy-to-let mortgage available to self-employed people. The loan, available on a loan to value of up to 85 per cent, is fixed at 7.49 per cent until either November 2003 or November 2006. Call 0800 7831204.

CREDIT SUISSE is offering a 1 per cent discount on lump sum investments into its Transatlantic Fund, a unit trust specialising in US equities. The discount is based on the fund's usual 5.25 per cent initial charge. Details from independent financial advisers. For a list of three IFAs near you, call 0117 971 1177.

PORTMAN BUILDING Society is withdrawing its one-year fixed interest bond at 6.75 per cent, following heavy demand. The company is launching a new bond, this time offering 6.5 per cent, with a minimum investment of £500. Call 0800 807080.

INTERNET INVESTOR
ROBIN AMLÔT

WE ARE fast approaching our last chance to buy a personal equity plan (PEP). There will, no doubt, be a rash of advertisements from the financial services sector over the next few months making sure that we do not forget this. But just how well does the PEP you may be considering investing in measure up? A new website developed by the Allenbridge Group provides both potential purchasers and existing owners of PEPs with a number of useful tools to help make investment decisions.

The Allenbridge Group is a firm of performance analysts that includes actuaries, analysts and former stockbrokers. It offers PEPs to the public on an execution-only basis. This means in practice that it can offer what may sometimes be substantial discounts on the initial investment charges PEP managers make.

For a further fee Allenbridge also offers a "PEP care" service. This is not a management service as such but a facility that will help you monitor your investment's performance and includes a Red Alert which makes PEP holders aware of erratic performance by fund managers. PEP care includes a free helpline allowing professional help to be sought on the telephone.

What makes the group's website particularly useful to investors are the search and analysis facilities. You may browse through Allenbridge's PEP ranking tables, searching the database in a number of ways, via fund type, investment sector, performance or just key word. All PEPs with a three-year history are listed.

For each PEP the table shows how well it has performed and compares the performance with others in the same sector. The table also has a measure of the consistency and volatility of the performance and compares the return received with the risk undertaken. Each individual fund is represented with a number of graphs and a simple guide to their interpretation.

Next April PEPs become history. Well, almost. There will still be an awful lot of us with quite a large sum of money tucked away in PEPs. In the future, the facilities offered by Allenbridge's website will allow you to continue to manage a PEP portfolio by monitoring its performance. Allenbridge is obviously hoping that you will do more than just browse its site and is offering the ability to effect transfers of funds between fund managers quickly and easily in addition to its PEP care programme.

Time may be running out for PEPs but it is also running out for anybody hoping to avoid Christmas. The decorations are already in the shops and now it seems you cannot even get away from them on your personal computer! The Co-operative Bank is offering a downloadable interactive advent calendar. Designed as a screensaver, it features 24 Christmas crackers which may only be pulled one per day in December in the run-up to Christmas. Each cracker explodes when it's pulled and will reveal an animated toy which can be played with around the screen.

This may strike the more cynical as twee and sad in equal measure, but the bank will be donating 1p to charity for every copy of the screensaver downloaded. And if avarice moves you more than charity, in addition to the standard screen saver, 24 versions have been specially created to give a prize a day to those lucky enough to download one at the right time.

When the winner clicks on their cracker, it will reveal a party hat which dances around the screen and then reveals that day's prize. These include a Christmas Hamper, vintage champagne, travel vouchers worth £500 and, remembering this is meant to be the season of goodwill, the chance to donate £100 to charity. You will be able to download the calendar from the Co-operative Bank's website later this month but it will only become active from 1 December.

The Allenbridge Group: www.allendirect.co.uk
Co-operative Bank: www.co-operativebank.co.uk
Robin can be reached at RobinAmlot@aol.com

BEST BORROWING RATES

	Telephone number	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive
MORTGAGES					
FIXED RATES					
FirstMortgage	0800 086066	3.75% to 1.11.00	75%	£420	
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	5.25% for 3 years	95%	-	£300 cash rebate
Woolwich	0845 607666	6.19% to 1.1.04	85%	£255	No MIP & flexible option
VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES					
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 0725726	5.15% for 2 years	95%	-	1% of advance rebated
Alliance & Leicester	0845 303 3000	5.70% to 1.12.01	90%		No MIP free valn
Coventry BS	0345 666522	6.20% to 31.1.04	95%	£295	No MIP, free valn
FIRST TIME BUYERS FIXED RATES					
Northern Rock	0845 6050500	3.99% to 1.01.01	95%	£250	No MIP, adv up to 105%
West Bromwich BS	0121 5257070	5.49% to 31.1.02	90%	£295	£300 cash rebate
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	5.90% for 5 years	95%	£295	-
FIRST TIME BUYERS VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES					
Coventry BS	0345 666522	3.60% to 31.1.01	95%	£295	No MIP for adv up to 90%
Scarborough BS	0990 133149	5.40% for 3 years	95%	-	£300 cash rebate
NationwideBS	0990 302010	6.30% for 5 years	95%	£295	Rebate of valuation fee

PERSONAL LOANS

UNSECURED	Telephone	APR %	Fixed monthly presents on £5K over 3 yrs: With Insurance	Without Insurance
Northern Rock	0845 421421	9.9% H	£183.14	£155.56
PhoneALoan(YorkBrk)	0800 7386898	12.8%	£185.02	£155.91
Direct Line	0161 880 0969	12.9%A	£183.75	£155.38

SECURED LOANS (SECOND CHARGE)	Telephone	APR	Max LTV	Advance	Term
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	9.0%	Neg	£3K to £15K	6 mths to 25 years
Royal Bank of Scotland via local branch		10.3%	70%	£2.5K to £100K	3 years to retirement
Nationwide BS	01783 513513	11.5%	85%	£3K to £25K	1 year to 25 years

OVERDRAFTS

	Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Authorised APR	Unauthorised % pm	Unauthorised APR
Alliance & Leicester	0500 950595	Alliance	0.95%	12.00%	2.20%	29.6%
Nationwide BS	0500 302010	Freecount	0.97%	12.25%	2.10%	28.3%
Abbey National	0800 7317774	Bank	1.09%	13.90%	2.25%	31.1%

CREDIT CARDS

	Telephone	Card Type	Rate % pm	APR %	Annual Fee	Int.-free period	Min Income
People'sBankConnecticut	0500 551055	MasterCard/Visa	0.58%N	6.90%N	Nil	56 days	
Capital One Bank	0800 9525252	Visa	0.5655%N	6.90%N	Nil	54 days	
RBS Advanta	0800 077770	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil	56 days	
GOLD CARDS							
People'sBankConnecticut	0500 551055	MasterCard/Visa	0.58%N	6.90%N	Nil	56 days	£20K
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Base rate Visa	0.98%	11.40%	£120	46days	£20K
Capital One Bank	0800 9525252	Visa	0.5655%N	6.90%N	Nil	54 days	£20K

STORE CARDS

	Telephone	Payment by direct debit % pm	Payment by direct debit % APR	Payment by other methods % pm	Payment by other methods APR
John Lewis	Via store	1.35%	18.0%	1.39%	18.0%
Bhs	Via store	1.95%	26.0%	2.15%	29.0%
Marks & Spencer	01244 681681	1.97%	26.3%	2.07%	27.8%

A – Minimum age 22 yrs. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's existing customers
APR – Annualised percentage rate
ASU – Accident, sickness and unemployment insurance
B+C – Buildings and contents insurance
H – Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged
LTV – Loan to value
MIP – Mortgage Indemnity premium
N – Introductory rate for a limited period
U – Unemployment insurance

* If completion is before 30.4.98
All rates subject to change without notice.
Source: MONEYFACTS 01603 476476 — *12 Nov 1998*

BEST SAVINGS RATES

	Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit £	Rate %	
INSTANT ACCESS						
Woolwich	0800 222290	Card Saver	Instant	£50	6.50%	Year
Stroud & Swindon BS	0345 413653	Branch instant	Instant	£100	5.75%	Year
Halifax	01422 333333	Instant Saver	Instant	£500	6.50%	Year
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 225777	Premiere Access	Instant	£5,000	6.65%	Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS						
Egg	0845 6080292	Instant Access	Instant (B)	£1	8.00%	Year
Gateway	0800 986995	Direct Savings	Instant (B)	£2,500	7.65%	Year
Sagaster over 50s	0800 514615	Postal Savings	Postal	£10,000	7.75%	Year
Halifax	0345 263646	Premium Direct	Instant (T)	£20,000	7.45%	Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS						
Dunfermline BS	01383 627727	Dunfermline Direct	28 Day (P)	£25,000	7.80%	Year
Leopold Joseph	0171 9882323	40 Day Notice	40 Day	£10,000	7.50%	Year
Standard Life Bank	0345 565656	50 Day Notice	50 Day (T)	£1	7.30%	Year
Northern Rock	0845 6006287	Save Direct 50	50 Day (B)	£3,000	7.05%	Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS						
AMC Bank	0181 4472040	MCA	Instant	£5,000	6.75%	Day
Halifax	0113 235 8228	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	5.45%	Day
Cheltenham & Glos BS	0800 429429	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	5.65%	Year
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 0726738	Alpha Cheque	Instant	£10,000	6.80%	Year
FIXED RATE BONDS						
Northern Rock	0845 600 4468	Fixed Rate Bond	30.9.99	£10,000	7.30% F	Yearly
Northern Rock	0845 6004466	Fixed Rate Bond	30.9.99	£50,000	7.65% F	Yearly
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0800 225777	Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£3,000	7.05% F	Maturity
Bristol Bank	0800 373191	Fixed Rates	2 Year	£2,500	6.40% F	1/2 Yearly
FIRST TESSAS						
Lambeth BS	0800 225221		5 Year	£3,000	8.10%	Year
Ipswich BS	01473 211021		5 Year	£3,000	8.05%	Year
Saga (for over 50s)	0800 300555		5 Year	£3,000	8.05%	Year
Norwich & Peterboro BS	0800 885322		5 Year	£100	8.00%	Year
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS						
Barclays Bank	0800 400100		5 Year	£9,000	8.20%	Year
Yorkshire Bank	0845 607239		5 Year	£9,000	8.10%	Year
Lambeth BS	0800 225221		5 Year	£9,000	8.10%	Year
Staffordshire BS	0800 216121		5 Year	£9,000	8.05%	Year
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)						
NPI	01222 782888		13 12.99	£18,000	5.65%	Fix Year
AIG Life (UK)	0700 2445433		2 Year	£5,000	4.60%	Fix Year
AIG Life (UK)	0700 2445433		3 Year	£5,000	4.60%	Fix Year
AIG Life (UK)	0700 2445433		4 Year	£5,000	4.60%	Fix Year
Westlife Assurance	0800 228855		5 Year	£10,000	5.50%	Fix Month
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)						
Perpetual Channel Islands	01481 822747	Instant 5	Instant	£5,000	7.00%	Year
Britannia International Ltd	01624 681188	Capital Wise Direct	Instant	£10,000	7.30%	Year
C&G Channel Islands	01481 715422	Guernsey 30	30 Day	£25,000	7.45%	Year
NorthernRock(Guernsey)	01481 718121	Offshore 90 Day	90 Day	£25,000	8.00%	Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)						
Investment Accounts			1 Month	£20	5.80%	Year
				£500	5.25%	Year
				£2,500	5.50%	Year
				£5,000	5.75%	Year
				£10,000	6.00%	Year
				£25,000	6.25%	Year
				£50,000	6.75%	Year
Income Bonds			3 Month	£2,000	7.00%	Month
				£25,000	7.25%	Month
Capital Bonds Series 1			5 Year	£100	6.00% F	Maturity
FIRST Option Bonds			12 Month	£1,000	6.25% F	Year
				£20,000	6.50% F	Year
Pensioners Guaranteed Income Bond Series 5			5 Year	£500	5.00% F	Month
42th Issue (tax free)			5 Year	£100	4.00% F	Maturity
13th Index-Linked (tax free)			5 Year	£100	2.00% F	Maturity
Children's Bonds Issue J (tax free)			5 Year	£25	5.00% F	Maturity

B – Withdrawals via Bank Clearing System
F – Fixed rate (all other rates variable)
N – Net rate
P – By post only

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.
Source: *MONEYFACTS 01603 476476.* — *12 Nov 1998*

Club that's all the rage

The new mortgage middlemen mean business. By Rachel Fixsen

LOOKING FOR a mortgage used to be simple. Until the early Eighties, the only lenders were building societies operating a cartel system to set interest rates.

Now banks, insurance companies and even retailers lend to home buyers. This may cause confusion for first-time buyers but, thanks to the competition, the best deals are now better than ever.

New middlemen have emerged. Mortgage clubs or wholesalers sit between brokers and lenders, doing some of a broker's legwork. They provide information on deals offered by a panel of recommended lenders.

Because they can generate huge volumes of business for the lenders on their panel, mortgage clubs are able to negotiate and offer exclusive deals which offer good value to borrowers.

For example, Legal & General's mortgage club offers a three-year fixed rate at 6.85 per cent, while John Charcol offers fixed-rate deals only for periods of five or 10 years. Peter Timberlake of Legal & General, which runs the Legal & General Mortgage Club, says: "We're placing about £5bn a year of business. If it was our own money, we would be bigger than some of the well known high-street lenders."

Many mortgage clubs grew out of the panels of recommended mortgage lenders that life insurance companies' own tied agents would use for their clients. Why do the life companies do it? Certainly not for the fees they receive. Ray Boulger, of brokers John Charcol, says: "It's really about generating additional business for the life company." The club gives the life insurer an additional product to sell, which could generate "leads" – names of potential clients for their insurance sales force to target.

But this is not always the case. Some companies are not insurers and simply earn their money as outsourcers working on behalf of lenders. They package their own mortgages but do not actually lend the money themselves. Private Label is a mortgage packager the products of which are available only through independent financial advisers. It was set up 11 years ago and brought in more than £1 billion in new business last year.

Though the lender is often hidden, the borrower will always know who is lending them money. "People like the comfort of knowing who the lender is," says Mr Boulger.

Stephen Knight, director of Private Label, says the company's products tend to have an edge that borrowers will not find elsewhere. He cites a fixed-rate deal: clients can choose to be tied in beyond the five-year fixed-rate period, or to have the freedom to take their business elsewhere when the phase is up.

Deals generated by mortgage wholesalers have to be a plus for the borrower, says the Consumers' Association (CA). But Neil Walkling, principal researcher at the CA, adds a word of caution. "If mortgages are offered through life companies, there is a question whether there is pressure to buy certain products which might not be suitable."

'The Independent' is offering a free 36-page 'Guide to Flexible Mortgages', sponsored by First Active. Call 0800 550551 or fill in the coupon on this page

Can we trust in the future?

THE JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN

The paradox of investment trusts is that demand is often at its highest when performance is almost certain to decline

Economic chaos and political unrest in the Far East have been bad news for the investment trust sector *Andrew Wong/AP*

HAS THE investment trust sector had its day? The analysts at BT Alex Brown are too diplomatic to put it quite so bluntly, but it is the question which underlies their latest annual review of the sector.

After a glorious first half of the decade, when funds under management soared and discounts narrowed, investment trusts have spent most of the second half of the Nineties on the back foot, beleaguered by indifferent performance, restless shareholders and rapidly widening discounts.

There is no doubt that Daniel Godfrey, the new director general of the Association of Investment Trust Companies, faces a stiff task as he sets about trying to bolster the image and credibility of the sector. The Nineties have, as BT Alex Brown's Simon Colson points out, been favourable environment for the retail savings market: marked by favourable demographics, rising asset prices and as benign a set of economic conditions as one could hope to see in a lifetime's investment experience.

Yet it is the unit trust business that, by and large, has walked away with most of the competitive rewards. Assets of investment trusts have risen by 150 per cent over the last decade, but those of the unit trust business are up by 250 per cent, and the gap between the two sectors is widening, as my chart shows. For the last two years, the investment trust sector has seen a net outflow of funds.

As so often happens, the sector's *annus mirabilis* of 1994, when £8bn of new money flowed in, mostly into specialist trusts, proved to be the peak of the market. Almost ever since the performance of the sector has been in relative decline, though the bull market in both bonds and equities means that shareholders with exposure to the right markets have mostly done all right in absolute terms.

One particularly doleful statistic is that of the 50 new issues which have raised more than £50m in the last 10 years, 30 are currently below their issue price. And 20 of those are down by more than 50 per cent. This mostly reflects the fact that most of the new money which has been raised has gone into once fashionable sectors which have since performed terribly – with the Far East and emerging markets to the fore.

In one important sense, this is not the trust sector's fault. Any business can only supply customers with things that they demand, and the flow of money into poor performing sectors in part only reflects the fact that investors ultimately make their own asset allocation decisions.

The longstanding paradox about investment trusts – as with many financial market products – is that demand is often greatest at the point in time when performance is almost certain to decline. This in turn reflects the broader paradox that investors nonsensically want to buy funds which are in markets or sectors that have done best in the recent past, rather than those which have done less well and which can be expected to do better in future.

While widening discounts have been a problem for all investment trusts, BT Alex Brown's data suggests that, on closer analysis, the underlying performance of the fund managers themselves has not been that bad. Measured against the Footsie index, the asset value performance of the sector has rarely been as poor as it is now. But once you allow for the fact that investment trusts have always had a greater international exposure than other retail market funds, the relative performance is not so bad.

However, nobody can deny that any business which seeks to sell its customers investment funds, and loses them money on half its new product range, faces a serious marketing problem. This is exacerbated by the fact that investment trusts have been unable (or unwilling) to pay commissions to independent financial advisers, and are not getting the sales push from intermediaries that unit trusts capitalise on.

This is a pity, since the evidence continues to show that many traditional investment trusts are still exceptionally good value. Overall, total expense ratios for investment trusts are markedly lower than those of equivalent unit trusts (though emerging markets trusts and other specialist funds are more expensive, producing a uniquely unfavourable combination of lousy performance and high charges).

It is true that there are far too many indifferently-managed investment trusts around, and a cull is urgently needed, but the quality of investment management is generally superior to the competition.

What is not in doubt is that the future of investment trusts can lies in the retail investment market. Institutional investors no longer have any need or desire to gain international exposure through the sector, and are actively looking for opportunities to divest their remaining holdings as soon as it is timely and tax-efficient to do so.

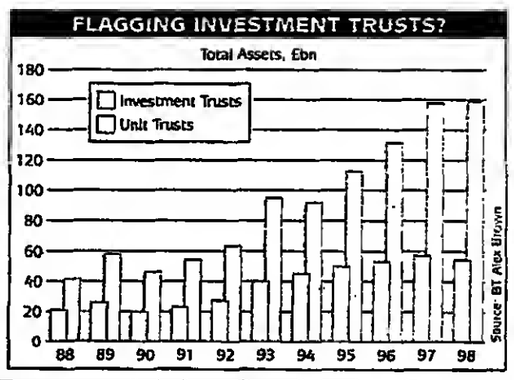
So the investment trust sector will sink or swim by its ability to find effective ways to reach the retail investment public. BT Alex Brown make the forceful point that the arrival of index tracking funds and OIECs (effectively single price unit trusts) faces the sector with an even bigger competitive challenge than in the past.

Can the sector pull itself out of its current rut? I still think so. Any solution has to involve at least two things.

One is the willingness of fund management groups to try and exploit the distinctive capabilities that investment trusts still have, which include their lower costs, the ability to borrow, and the scope to offer distinctive capital structures (an unsung success story of the past few years, for example, has been the market niche established by zero dividend preference shares).

The second requirement is the boards of investment trusts start to earn their crust. Discounts will never be eliminated completely, but they show the failure of many investment trusts to take their responsibilities to shareholders seriously.

It doesn't help that a number of fund management companies run unit trusts and investment trusts. Until boards stiffen demands on the fund managers, to make them more accountable and more performance conscious, the risks of Darwinian extinction will continue to hover over this venerable, but fascinating, sector.



LOOSE CHANGE

FLEMING Investment Trust Management is waiving all its charges for shareholders selling their existing UK listed share portfolio and investing the money in the company's Fleming Overseas Investment Trust. The offer, which applies until 31 December, means investors need only pay the 0.5 per cent stamp duty on the purchase of OIT shares. The trust aims to achieve capital growth from a range of overseas markets. Call 0500 500161 for details.

ALLIANCE & LEICESTER is now accepting monthly contributions into its Capital Growth PEP, with minimum investments of £50 a month. The fund invests in the top 350 UK-listed companies. Call 0800 0568000.

Genetic test dilemma

WOULD YOU be prepared to take out a genetic test to determine your predisposition to a range of diseases – including Huntington's disease, Alzheimer's and hereditary breast cancer – if the potential effect would be to deny you the possibility of ever buying your home or taking out life or medical insurance?

This is the dilemma which the Government attempted to grapple with last week, as it issued a long-awaited report into genetic testing.

Groups representing people with diseases that may soon be genetically tested have warned that an effect of such tests being the norm could be to deny life insurance, a requirement of most mortgage lenders, to anyone with a genetic predisposition to such illnesses. Or cover might be priced out of many people's reach.

The Department of Trade and Industry, which issued the report last week, claimed the Government has now reached a voluntary agreement with insurance companies to ensure all genetic tests are individually validated before they can be used by the industry. People who take genetic tests will have the right to keep the results from life insurance companies to prevent the birth of what many have called an uninsurable "genetic underclass".

This right, however, will extend only until the time when insurance companies can show that a genetic test has a proven ability to predict a person's premature death. Under the new proposals, people will also have a right to appeal against decisions where insurance is denied. An expert body will be set up early next year to assess whether a genetic test can provide companies with meaningful information on a person's insurance liability.

Under scrutiny: genetic tests *SDR*

The measures are the Government's response to recommendations by its Human Genetics Advisory Committee (HGAC) which said last December there should be a two-year moratorium on the use of genetic data by insurance companies.

The Association of British Insurers has identified eight disorders where genetic tests can be useful for insurers, including Huntington's chorea and Alzheimer's. It said that insurers should be able to have access to relevant medical information concerning a potential customer, including details of family history and genetic tests.

Ms Jowell said she had concerns about whether any of these tests were relevant and accurate enough for insurance purposes. "Each of these eight tests will have to be subject to the validation procedure we are outlining," she said.

The response of insurers is broadly approving. It comes as research by Swiss Re, the world's largest life and health reinsurer, shows 51 per cent of people would be unwilling to take a genetic test, while only 15 per cent would be willing to share it with an insurer.

Peter Maynard, head of research at Swiss Re, says: "There are concerns about how insurers handle genetic information. But life companies need to be able to write business in a way that involves fairness from and to both parties in a policy."

Ian Reed, general manager at Cornhill, says: "I am pleased that the Government is setting up this independent committee. It should bring clarity into a confused area.

"The Government has vindicated our stance to refuse to take genetic test results into consideration for policies under £100,000, even when it is available. Considerable progress has been made in the way the life [insurance] industry handles this information and we believe that the industry should have its own regulatory standards. The Government should not legislate on this.

"We are also concerned that an inflexible attitude could affect genetic research in general, and the customer's willingness to take such tests."

NIC CICUTTI

THE INDEPENDENT
Saturday 14 November 1998

Pre-pay is ringing the right bells

Pay-as-you-talk mobiles are already big in Europe and are catching on here, particularly with teenagers and new businesses. By Chris George

Up until a year or two ago there was only one way to get a mobile phone. You bought a handset at a ridiculously subsidised price, and in return you signed a contract to say that you would stay with your chosen network for at least a year.

During this 12-month commitment, you paid a monthly fee for the basic service, and extra for additional calls. "Free" handsets enticed many customers – but others, quite rightly, could see there was a catch.

Pre-pay mobile phones, where you buy the phone outright and without having to sign any contract, are now revolutionising the process of getting connected. There is no commitment – if you find you don't use the phone, you are not contracted into making unwanted monthly payments. All calls are paid for in advance.

Initially, pre-pay packages were designed simply to appeal to those who could not pass the stringent credit checks undertaken on those signing a 12-month contract. The high cost of the handsets and high call charges put others off. But with all four network operators now offering pre-pay, the schemes have evolved so that they appeal to a far wider audience. Peak rate calls can cost as little as 25p a minute, and from 5p in the evenings and at weekends.

The price of the kits, which include a basic handset and your first few calls, have been forced down by the entry of the big supermarkets. It was Asda which threw down the gauntlet last month, by offering a Cellnet package for just £89.99 – a £30 reduction on the previous high street price, made possible by the supermarket cutting its profit margin on the package.

"We're launching the people's phone," said Asda's trading director, Mike Coupe, when the supermarket entered the arena at the end of October. "Our move will send a signal to the phone operators that it's time to ring the changes." His prediction proved right: within a week other networks had responded with similar price reductions.

Pre-pay packages are particularly appealing for those who just want a phone for emergency use, or for incoming calls. There is no monthly fee for line rental – all you need is to buy the occasional top-up voucher to ensure you stay connected. Cellnet's EasyLife kit wins here, allowing you to keep your handset ringing for just £20 a year. Even those making an hour's worth of calls a day can find out that pre-pay packages can work out cheaper than a traditional contract agreement.

Pre-pay tariffs may not represent the ideal tariff for everyone – but the fact that you can buy them off the shelf without any fuss or paperwork has been the route of their success. They have also found approval in unexpected quarters: "They have proved particularly popular with start-up businesses and teenagers," says Ian Volans, a spokesman for One 2 One.

Recent price reductions follow similarly aggressive pricing or marketing of pre-pay in other European countries.

"In Italy, 9 per cent of the population have bought cellphones in the last year," explains Paul McAleese, Cellnet's head of consumer marketing. "And in Finland 95 per cent of 18 to 21-year-olds now own mobiles."

A disadvantage of pre-pay schemes is that the choice of phones is severely limited. Most of the handsets are large and offer few thrills. Furthermore, the number of services available to non-contract customers is also restricted.

"They are also a non-starter with corporate users," says McAleese "as there is no monthly bill."

Pre-pay is not the only way in which networks are enticing those who are worried about the cost of running a mobile. They are also spicing up contract tariffs. All-in-one kits, for instance, still require you to sign a contract, but by paying for your line rental in advance, the networks thank you with a substantial reduction in the first-year costs.

One 2 One's £150 kit includes a basic handset, connection, and a year's subscription to a tariff which includes 45 minutes of calls a month – a saving of over £100 on the usual price.

As networks try to appeal to more and more niche groups, and try to retain customers, the number of tariff options continues to go up. The myriad of price plans available means that it is even harder for users to be sure that they are getting the best deal.

Cellnet, for instance, has launched a new initiative where discounts are dependent on how long you have committed to the network, and on precisely which numbers you call. Uniquely, Cellnet allows you to sign a contract for just one month – but if you commit for longer you get lower call charges.

Those who sign up for five years get 15 per cent off. Imitating BT's Friends & Family scheme, Cellnet offers reductions of up to 50 per cent on calls made to 10 nominated numbers.

The confusion caused by such complex price plans has seen Orange introduce a value guarantee. Under the terms of this, users can opt for being charged by the price list of any of Orange's digital competitors.

The increasing complexity of the buying process may just be something we have to resign ourselves to. "By offering more choice and better value for money, the customer is bound to have more decisions to make," says Volans at One2One.

Chris George is a contributor to 'What Cellphone' magazine

HOW MUCH WILL YOUR PRE-PAID MOBILE COST YOU ?

Network	Tariff	Contact	Cost of cheapest phone including connection	Peak call costs per minute	Off-peak call cost per minute	Weekend call costs per minute	Minimum annual running cost to allow incoming/outgoing calls (maximum usage included in this cost)
Cellnet	U	No	£70	35p	35p	35p	£40 (£40 worth)
Cellnet	EasyLife	No	£100	49p	49p	49p	£20 (£20 worth)
Cellnet	Occasional Caller Plus	Yes	£45	37p	10p	2p	£210 (£60 worth)
Cellnet	Regular Caller Plus	Yes	£45	33p	10p	2p	£300 (£180 worth)
One 2 One	Up 2 you	No	£80	40p or 90p*	40p or 90p*	40p or 30p*	£80 (200 minutes)
One 2 One	One-2-45	Yes	£45	30p	5p	5p	£210 (540 minutes)
One 2 One	One-2-Weekend	Yes	£45	30p	10p	10p(free local calls)	£210 (all weekend local calls are free)
One 2 One	Precept 100	Yes	£45	20p(12p local)	5p	5p	£348 (1200 minutes)
Orange	Just talk	No	£80	50p or 25p*	50p or 25p*	50p or 25p*	£81 (112 minutes)
Orange	Talk 30	Yes	£45	30p	5p	5p	£210 (360 minutes)
Orange	Chart 60	Yes	£45	40p	5p	5p	£212 (720 minutes of-peak/weekend calls)
Orange	Talk 60	Yes	£45	24p	5p	5p	£353 (720 minutes)
Orange	Everyday 20	Yes	£45	40p	10p	10p	£182 (7300 minutes of-peak/weekend calls)
Vodaphone	Pay as you talk	No	£70	35p	5p	5p	£75 (£15 worth)
Vodaphone	Vodafone 20	Yes	£45	35p	5p	5p	£210 (360 minutes)
Vodaphone	Vodafone 60	Yes	£45	32p	5p	5p	£300 (720 minutes)
Vodaphone	Leisure 180	Yes	£45	35p	5p	5p	£210 (2160 minutes of-peak/weekend calls)

*The price of calls on these tariffs reduces if you buy £50 call vouches which remain valid for 90 days. The minimum annual running cost using these vouches is £209

Group up for a better rate

Get together with friends, and crank up your pension. By Teresa Hunter

GROUPS AS small as three can now cut the cost of investing and insuring, as institutions race to offer the cheapest deals possible to friends, professional associates, work colleagues, club mates or just about any meeting of minds.

Protecting one's own "group" is one of the oldest principles of personal finance, to which many of our modern institutions can trace their origins. Legal & General, was established to cater for lawyers, Clerical Medical for doctors and the clergy, and almost every religious sect once boasted a bank, building society and insurer.

Until recently banks and building societies have concentrated on mass-market affinity products, noticeably credit cards targeted at political parties, charities, trades unions and football clubs. These were followed by a raft of savings accounts for organisations as diverse as the Quakers and West Ham football club.

Underwriting much smaller deals is becoming increasingly attractive, as insurance brokers and independent financial advisers struggle to find a role for themselves, as a technical revolution threatens to cut out the middleman. Where they can't persuade an insurer to cut premiums, brokers will often give a discount themselves by reducing their own commission. And many niche insurers, also struggling to forge a role in a market dominated by giant phone operators, are open to suggestions.

Martin Bell, of brokers Camberford Law, explains: "The bigger the group, the greater the potential for cutting premiums, but it is possible to arrange a special deal for quite small groups of people." Willis National regional director Christine Ross says: "Consumers often fail to realise that they can save money by coming to us in small groups. It is our job to go out and negotiate the best deal we can for them."

Personal pensions is one area where quite large savings can be made by setting up arrangements for a very small group of employees or union members. Ms Ross cut the charges on a Standard Life personal pension in half for a group of just three.

"This can make a big difference to what is left to invest from a small contribution of £30 per month," she says. Even on a larger monthly premium of £200 cutting the charges in half will inject an extra £4,000 into the final value of a pension pot of a 60-year-old who took out the policy aged 36.

Group deals on motor insurance are tricky, as margins are already tight, and broker commission among the lowest at 12 per cent. But, a broker may split his commission with customers for group business. The scope for cutting household premiums is more encouraging: broker commission can reach 25 per cent. Top-up with a discount from the insurer and costs crash.

Marc Donfrancesco of Independent Insurance, which is sympathetic to affinity marketing, explains: "There are no hard and fast rules. If someone puts a reasoned case ... then you will listen. If you have a big national broker providing vital business, you will always try to accommodate where possible. But there has to be something in it for the insurer and for the broker as well as a good deal for the customer."

Where the group or the broker takes responsibility for admin the likelihood of a decent discount is greater. Jamie Marchant of Lombard General, which also specialises in affinity groups explains; "If someone will accept responsibility for collecting the premiums, and maybe the broker underwrites and issues the policy, then there can be additional rewards for the group."

The workplace remains the most popular place for forming partnerships, either with an employer or via a trades union.

Most of the large unions, including the TUC, GMB, MSF and Unison, offer special deals for members that also earn the union attractive commissions. One of the most successful is the finance union UniFI, that is soon due to merge with banking union Bifu and NatWest Staff Association.

It not only offers a wide range of discounted products from pets to weddings insurance to its own members, but it also brokers these policies for other unions. The Bakers & Allied Workers Union is currently in the process of signing up for its household insurance.

هكذا من الأصل

UK Equity Growth

Fund	Launch	Min Inv £	Fund Size £M	Offer Price	Latest 1Yr Perf	Rank
AbbeyAssetsEarnings	11/82	1000	59	389.10	102.07	100
AbbeyEthical	09/87	1000	39	91.15	83.10	136
‡AbbeyNatlN&PUKGth	11/72	500	82	124.10	108.44	81
‡AberdeenProfSpecialSits	02/82	500	184	167.74	83.07	137
‡AberdeenProfUKGth	08/85	500	335	77.49	110.54	28
‡ABNAMROUKGth	12/88	000	44	333.45	110.67	24
‡AllchurchesAmity	02/88	000	33	114.08	97.59	123
‡AllianceLeicesterCapGth	02/88	1000	187	73.64	109.52	36
‡AXAEquity&LawBritExcell	07/67	1000	43	127.00	102.00	94
‡AXASunLifeUKGth	05/85	4000	93	139.09	105.35	74
BankOfIrelandCapitalGth	10/84	1000	3	161.60	104.77	80
‡BarclaysCapital	10/57	1000	422	251.80	106.01	69
BaringUKGth	11/87	1000	51	149.40	105.49	72
‡BGIUKGth	11/72	1000	349	586.50	107.84	57
‡BritanniaBalGth	01/84	500	261	192.86	106.09	76
‡BWDEquityGth	01/86	500	4	117.22	138.70	44
CanlifeGeneral	09/71	2000	179	297.60	106.10	75
CavendishOpportunities	02/88	10000	5	226.60	80.03	143
‡CCMGth	12/68	500	30	772.60	100.14	116
‡CCMSpecialSituations	03/71	500	60	167.40	99.87	118
CGUPPTUKGth	03/84	500	5	283.69	105.76	56
CMCommunityGth	11/84	25000	0	154.00	114.38	7
‡CISUKGth	09/89	500	1241	294.00	108.47	45
CityFinclAsts	04/86	500	2	91.53	97.90	124
‡ClericalMedPedigreeGth	09/86	1000	96	89.33	104.38	85
ClericalMedSpecialSits	12/88	1000	43	82.77	103.20	90
‡ColonelTop50	10/95	1000	15	81.05	111.64	18
‡CreditSuisseFellowship	07/88	1000	82	137.40	88.66	130
DresdnerRCMUKGth	07/86	2500	7	833.95	113.20	9
‡DresdnerRCMUKMid-Cap	05/62	500	99	901.40	100.80	34
‡EdinburghSafetyFirstCA	02/80	500	41	452.41	112.09	12
‡EquitableSpecialSituations	03/96	2000	24		105.61	70
‡BaserCapitalGth	12/84	500	09	94.79	100.73	113
FidelityInstFdsUK	04/89	1000	94	163.01	116.72	5
‡FidelityRecovery	05/96	300000	167		106.14	63
‡FidelitySpecialSituations	11/87	1000	93		80.37	154
‡FidelityUKGth	12/79	1000	865		91.68	139
‡FiveArrowsUKPtfl	06/65	1000	850		102.27	99
FlemingGth	12/94	1000	04	86.81	101.67	103
FlemingSelectSpecUKEqty	11/87	10000	29	49.63	109.83	32
FlemingSelectUKEquity	07/95	100000	00	169.00	112.02	15
‡FramlingtonUKGth	07/95	100000	23	100.30	112.04	14
FriendsHouseCapital	12/82	500	13	85.14	100.82	104
‡FriendsProvStewardship	07/73	500	3	405.45	101.85	107
FriendsProvUKFocus	06/84	1000	447	527.10	87.02	165
‡FriendsProvUKGth	11/82	1000	40	68.30	106.35	62
‡GAEquityGth	11/89	1000	349	278.00	105.74	57
‡GANSafetyNetStockmarket	12/85	500	25	287.00	95.85	132
‡GartmoreBritishGth	01/86	100000	28	149.30	102.29	98
GartmoreMasterTrust	01/87	1000	207	77.21	96.67	120
GartmorePSFCmdRiskUKEq	06/97	100000	105	114.10	106.00	67
GartmorePSFUKEquity	03/97	100000	5	110.37	101.24	106
‡GartmoreUKCapitalGth	04/88	100000	0	389.74	111.00	22
‡GovettUKEquityGeneral	10/86	1000	34	134.00	93.45	136
‡GTUKBlueChip	03/83	500	147	405.84	108.16	43
GuardianGthEquity	02/68	1000	20	288.30	109.38	65
‡GuinnessFlightUKOp	06/89	600	29	542.50	99.41	120
‡HalifaxGth	02/79	500	4	471.00	88.69	145
‡HendersonBestofBritish	01/86	1000	705	44.09	100.14	91
HendersonUKEnt	01/87	1000	66	84.24	101.03	109
‡HenryCookeUKGth	02/80	1000	21	444.10	100.02	117
‡HenryCookeUKSpecialSits	09/81	500	13	212.90	101.57	185
HillSamuelEngGth	02/74	500	4	230.60	100.73	89
‡HillSamuelSpecialSituations	09/64	500	38	581.32	105.80	45
‡HLUKPerformance	07/79	500	23	266.97	104.82	79
‡HSBCTheFootsieFund	03/97	2000	3	51.84	87.69	148
HSBCValueIndex	02/93	1000	96	89.69	115.24	6
HSBCUKGth	10/91	1000	8	177.30	88.93	141
INVESCOFundforChildren's	07/75	1000	3	956.70	108.95	40
‡INVESCOUKGth	04/88	1000	40	149.10	110.43	27
‡JohnsonFrySlaterGth	11/84	1000	231	99.03	100.93	111
‡JohnsonFryUKGth	11/87	1000	145	239.20	94.05	133
‡JupiterUKGth	10/95	1000	15	109.81	112.58	11
JupiterUKGthEx	09/85	500	243	118.00	109.74	43
‡JupiterUKSpecialSituations	03/88	3000	15	4636.00	137.33	1
LaurenceKeenPennineGth	05/95	500	127	11.42	97.18	127
‡LazardUKCapital	07/84	500	4	52.27	77.12	156
‡Legal&GenEquity	04/71	1000	33	574.10	97.43	136
	04/71	1000	342	748.40	110.19	28

UK Equity Income

UK Growth & Income

UK Equity & Bond

UK Equity & Bond Income

UK Gilt

UK Fixed Interest

UK Smaller Companies

Managed Fund

International Equity Growth

International Equity Income

International Equity & Bond

International Fixed Interest

Investment Trust Units

Europe

North America

Far East Excluding Japan

Far East Including Japan

Japan

Emerging Markets

Money Market

Property

Commodity & Energy

Fund of Funds

Index Bear

Life Managed Funds

This information is listed by sector, not by company, in order to allow investors to define the comparative performance of their trusts relative to others

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Top five performing funds of each sector are highlighted in bold. All funds are more than one year old. Fund sizes taken on the first day of the previous month. Fund performances are calculated on an Offer to Bid price basis with net income reinvested at 3d date and illustrate the value of £100 original investment.
Life Funds that are Closed to New Business have been excluded.

‡ denotes a fund available through a Manager's PEP scheme

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Bloomberg
www.bloomberg.com/uk

Some people have put it to pattern-happy Peppercorn that she should be a graphic designer but she is content designing Fifties-with-a-Nineties-twist ceramics *Sean Paget*

Pepper your home with class

Marie Peppercorn's ceramics derive their inspiration from avant-garde Fifties art. By **Dominic Lutyens**

Marie Peppercorn is one canny designer. Two years ago, while studying for her MA in Ceramic Design for Production in Stoke-on-Trent, her antennae were finely tuned to the latest consumer trends. "Interiors then were becoming as trendy as fashion. People were starting to spend as much on their homes as on their clothes, and this gave me the idea to decorate my ceramics with furniture motifs," she explains.

In another shrewd move, Lancashire-born Peppercorn chose to concentrate on Fifties furniture motifs. If interiors are hip, then Fifties retro is at the height of Nineties' nest-building chic. To say nothing of the auction houses' thirst for flogging classic Fifties furniture and the recent proliferation of hefty coffee-table tomes on the subject, including *Contemporary – Architecture and Interiors of the 1950s*, by Lesley Jackson. "You can't pick up an interiors magazine without seeing a piece of furniture by Charles and Ray Eames or one of their contemporaries," says Peppercorn.

Previously a model, Peppercorn started her current career with a BA in Printmaking at the University of Central Lancashire. "My work was pattern-orientated and suited to 3D surfaces, so it was a natural progression to go on to do an MA in Ceramics," she says.

Yet she found the transition difficult: "A lot of people on my course had done ceramics for three years. All I'd made was a slab pot on a B-Tech course." But Peppercorn soon caught up, thanks to a work placement she did at Wedgewood in the potteries centre of Stoke On Trent.

Today, she has her own studio in Stoke, where there is no shortage of good suppliers for her raw materials. The switch to ceramics has more than paid off, and Peppercorn has had a busy year. In July, she was bombarded with enquiries and orders after showing at the *New Designers In Business* exhibition at Islington Design Centre and, earlier this month, her retro-chic ceramics featured in an exhibition at Mission, the hip west-London gallery.

Her dainty chair motifs, wiggly grids and softly geometric patterns are primarily reminiscent of fine art, so it comes as no surprise that Peppercorn lists such abstract expressionist painters as Mark Rothko and William de Kooning as strong influences. "My ceramics provide a canvas for my designs," she says and, appropriately, she produces "coupe" plates, with no rim, which are "more decorative than functional". "The idea came from the flat plates people hung on their walls in the Fifties," she says. "As wall-hung pieces, they're like an extension of my etchings – although they can be used to eat off, too."

Most of her work is produced as limited editions, because she believes that people are going off mass-produced products. "In the Eighties and early Nineties, people wanted a very slick finish, but now they're after more original pieces."

Arty perhaps, but Peppercorn is no besmocked, clay-under-the-fingernails potter: she doesn't hand-throw her ceramics, but uses moulds. What really excites her is how her earthenware vases or bone-china plates and cups and saucers are decorated and what colours they come in. For her basic glaze, Peppercorn sticks to five colours: white, lemon, aqua, mauve (a purplish hue) and lilac (more pinkish). But her motifs and patterns come in all shades – from autumnal greens to fiery magentas. Motifs are translated on to a silkscreen and screenprinted, using hand-mixed enamels and oxides. The transfers are collaged on to her ceramics and fired.

Some people have put it to pattern-happy Peppercorn that she should be a graphic designer. But she replies: "If I was, I'd be just another graphic designer, but because my ceramics incorporate graphic designs, they look different."

Peppercorn's zesty, Fifties-with-a-Nineties twist designs might look frivolous to some, but her ideas are culled from a sophisticated knowledge of avant-garde postwar design. Motifs include the Eames duo's LCW Lounge Chair, Hans Wegner's Butterfly Chair and Verner Panton's S Chair. Inspiration is also drawn from Lancashire-based firm, David Whitehead. Part of the euphoric enthusiasm for modernism in the postwar years, this experimental company employed artists such as John Piper and Henry Moore to design textiles and ceramics.

Peppercorn's own designs, however, hark back to the classic Fifties Homemaker tableware range, which came scattered with graphic illustrations of classic Fifties furniture by designers such as Robin Day.

Thanks to her clear sense of colour, Peppercorn's tableware can be harmoniously mixed and matched, and it is also reasonably priced. Clean-lined, quirkily decorated cups and saucers cost from £10, coupe plates and ashtrays range from £15 to £18, while prices for her intricately patterned, more labour-intensive, vases vary according to how much work has gone into them. Predominantly magenta pieces are more expensive, she says, because reddish glazes are gold-based.

Ceramics are all the rage now, and pieces by popular new designers such as Peppercorn don't normally come cheap. Marie Peppercorn is currently exhibiting 40 of her pieces at "A Contemporary Christmas", a group show at The Charleston Gallery in East Sussex, which opened this month. You will also be able to see her work from 20 November, at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and at "Ceramics Contemporaries Three", a touring exhibition which kicks off at the Royal College of Art in February.

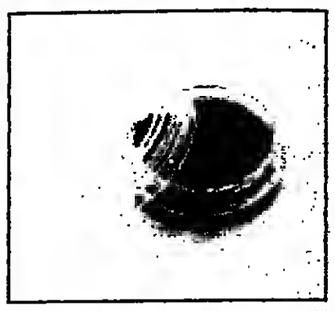
Her work has appeared in magazines such as *Marie Claire* and *Living Etc.*, and Nieman Marcus in New York is interested in including Peppercorn's work in a retrospective exhibition of 20th-century furniture to mark the new millennium. Now is the time to buy, it would seem – before the secret gets out.

Marie Peppercorn is currently seeking sponsorship. Anyone interested in backing her or wishing to buy ceramics directly can contact her on 01782 848805

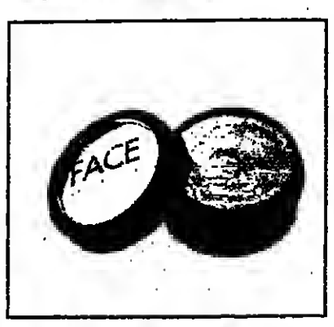
Eight Of The Best

LIP GLOSSES

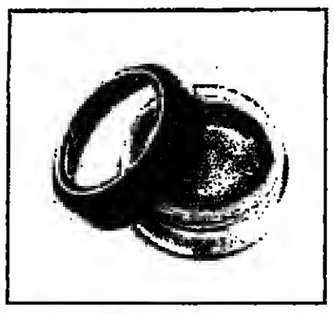
Romance Lip Balm, £4.95, Crabtree & Evelyn (mail order 01235 862244)



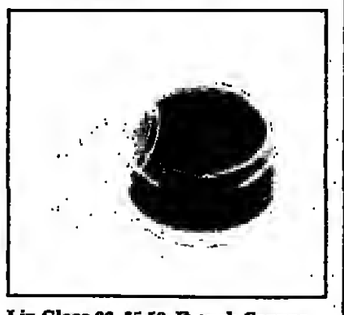
Shu Uemura Lip Gloss, £12 (enquiries 0171 493 4349)



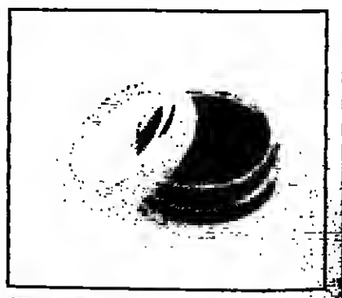
Face Stockholm Pot Gloss in Striking, £10, Liberty (0171 734 1234)



Gloss Pot in Lust, £1.59, Collection 2000 (stockists 01695 50078)



Lip Gloss 06, £5.50, French Connection (enquiries 0171 399 7200)



Black Lilac Glosswear, £8, Clinique (0171 409 6951 for stockists)

Left: Divinyls Lip Gloss in Black Dahlia, £9, Trucco (mail order 01222 255065). Right: Colourings Lip Tint, £3.75, The Body Shop (01903 731500)

Check It Out

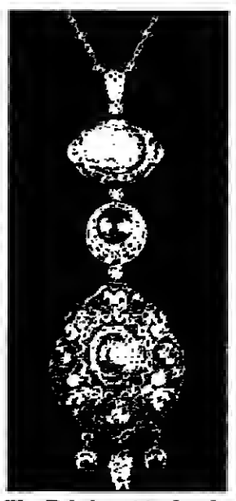
OLYMPIA WINTER FINE ART AND ANTIQUES FAIR

"THE WINTER Olympia is like an exclusive store," says Victoria Borwick, director of Olympia Winter Fine Art and Antiques Fair. "While luxurious items – from spectacular jewellery to elegant furniture – appeal to the serious collectors and buyers, other visitors appreciate the choice, particularly of decorative pieces, either for themselves or as gifts."

There will be 230 international dealers participating in this year's fair, which begins on Monday, and exhibits will encompass just about everything from candelabra to ceramics. Hoping to attract discerning buyers to this year's furniture dealers, Borwick points out the success of last year's variety of English furniture.

In addition to the furniture, though, there will also be a huge range of silver, including a pair of Benjamin Smith silver-gilt seven-light Regency candelabra. Antique-silver expert, Suzy Fitz Gerald of J H Bourdon-Smith Ltd, enjoys the "festive atmosphere" of Olympia, where visitors can make the most of the fact that "there are always unusual presents to suit all budgets."

Jewellery on display will include Anthea AG Antiques' 19th-century, pearl-and-15-carat-gold necklace and tiara (£3,650), and Tadema's Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Sixties designs. Sonya Newell-Smith of the Tadema Gallery, a regular exhibitor at the Fair, is enthusiastic about the event. "It is always a good start to our busiest season," she explains.



The Fair is set to dazzle

This year's fair will also include a huge range of paintings. And, apart from the European exhibits on show, the fair also boasts a display of 20th-century Chinese lacquer work. If you would like to know more, Andrew Bolton, curator of the Far Eastern Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum, will give a lecture on the Yangzhou loan exhibition at the fair on Wednesday 18 November, at 6.30pm.

For those here to spend, the good news is that, although the fair does attract a large number of collectors and knowledgeable buyers, help will always be on hand for those with less expertise. James Mitchell collects 18th- to 20th-century European watercolours and drawings, and recommends a return visit after last year's fair: "The combination of highly affordable, good quality exhibits in a relaxed and unpretentious fair seems to encourage a much greater degree of dialogue between dealers and visitors."

The Olympia Fine Arts and Antique Fair, from 16 to 22 November, National Hall, Olympia Exhibition Centre, Hammersmith Road, London W4. Entrance £5. Advance tickets available on 0171 244 2219. Tickets for Andrew Bolton's lecture cost £10 and can be obtained from Mary Claire Boyd on 0171 370 8345

SAM WALLACE

I WANT ... AN EXPENSIVE WATCH FOR CHRISTMAS

You are what you wear on your wrist

YOUR WATCH says more about your wealth than your clothes ever will. In the first of a series giving you the low-down on what every man wants in his Christmas stocking, here are *five to consider asking* Santa for...

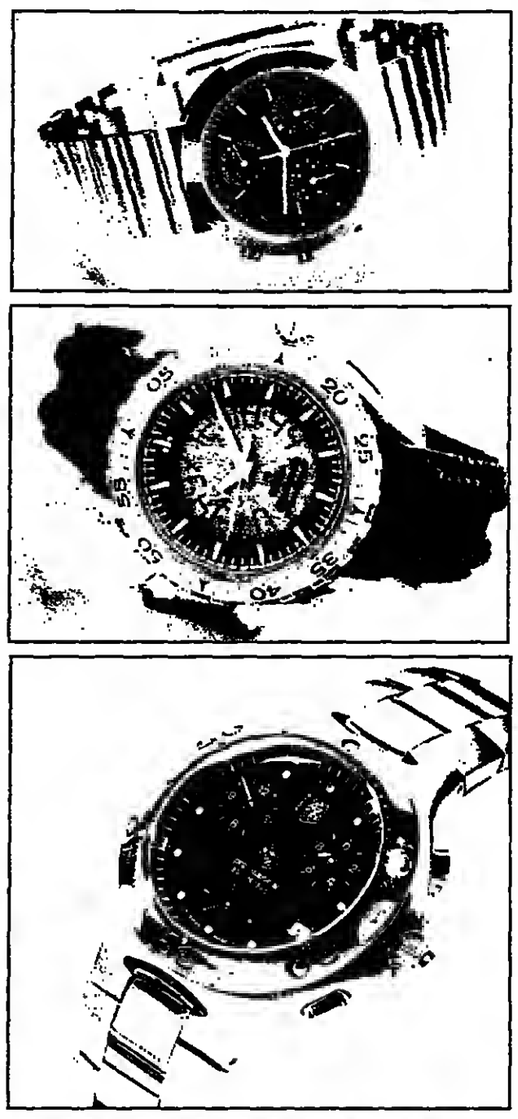
Name: Nike Triax 250
Price: £95 (0800 0561640 for stockists)
Description: All the rage in the style press at the end of last year, and its appeal has yet to wane. Like the Mercurial football boot, Nike makes an asset of the inherent plastic nature of its products: the snug-fitting polyurethane strap is sold on its resistance to cracking, the ergonomically angled face has brazen Janet & John-sized digits and an Electrolite which glows aquamarine in the dark. And despite five buttons, it is remarkably straightforward (eg green for start lap-counter, red for stop). Love or hate it, people will always have an opinion about it.
Water resistance: 100m
Functions: Time (two zones), date, alarm (up to seven/day), timer, data storage (for previous runs) and repeat timer (for interval training).
Label hipness: After dominating the Nineties, the Nike label seems to be suffering pre-millennial angst. Profits are down and PR took a caning over "Ronaldo-gate" in the wake of the World Cup final. Plus even your dad probably owns something made by Nike now. Tread gingerly.
Style rating: ★★★★
Suitable for: The bloke who says "brilliant" on *The Fast Show*. And his girlfriend.
Others in the range worth considering: If you're planning to do a marathon, the Triax 26 (£65) is tailor-made for you.

Name: cK Calvin Klein Tech K217
Price: £170 (01703 646800 for stockists)
Description: The discreet cK logo is almost unnecessary. The design of this stainless steel Swiss-made watch silently screams Calvin Klein, exuding that tell-tale minimalist style. The strap clasp, however, leaves something to be desired.
Water resistance: 50m
Functions: Standard chronograph stopwatch function.
Label hipness: It may be good branding but Calvin Klein's sexual ambivalence occasionally seems to verge on the characterless. There is still a certain cachet to the name Calvin Klein but how many more product extensions can it withstand?
Style rating: ★★★
Suitable for: Men who like simple pleasures – Gap T-shirts, combat trousers and One2One adverts featuring Kate Moss.
Others in the range worth considering: White-faced cK Calvin Klein Dress K4111 (£150) for your partner – if you're going down the cK route, there is no point doing it by halves.

Name: Breitling B-One
Price: £1,595 (0171-636 5200 for stockists)
Description: The B-One's rear casing is modelled on an aeroplane's turbine and is the epitome of class. The front is a sensory overload: gold wings, loads of technical-looking numbers for doing things professional pilots do, and a digital 24-hour clock, for when you give up trying to find the precise location of the minute hand. If a watch's worth were measured by its weight in gold, this Swiss-made monster would require a chunk of Fort Knox to house it. Comes with a leather, sharkskin or chunky stainless steel strap.
Water resistance: 50m
Functions: Time (two zones), glare-proof glass, chronograph split and add functions, alarm, NVG-compatible backlighting, alarms (one per time zone) and an "overdrive pinion mechanism which operates the slide rule disk by rotating bezel".
Label hipness: If you number Second World War pilots among your friends, you will be the proverbial Snoopy's testicles.
Style rating: ★★★★
Suitable for: Rich flyboy wannabes with big mits.
Others in the range worth considering: If you want something smaller and simpler, and plan to go searching for shipwrecked treasure, then opt for the Breitling SuperOcean Automatic, which is brighter (a bright orange face; more tasteful than it sounds) and goes deeper (1,000m) at less expense (£980).

Name: Omega Speedmaster Professional
Price: £1,475 (01703 646800 for stockists)
Description: As chronograph watches go this is a classic. Comprising a crisp black face with no extraneous Arabic numerals to clutter up its functions, the Speedmaster Professional has the distinction of being the watch which Neil Armstrong was wearing when he stepped on the moon.
Water resistance: Forget the moon. The Omega is built to survive an intergalactic battering and operates in temperatures from -18°C to 93°C (so it will work if you fall into a freezer but will go pear-shaped if you attempt to remove chips from vats of boiling fat with your bare hands).
Functions: Standard chronograph functions and a tachometer, which was used to time Scott and Irwin's moon-buggy race in the lunar rover.
Label hipness: If approval from Nasa's rocket scientists fails to impress you, then I doubt endorsements from Cindy Crawford, Field Marshal Montgomery and James Bond are going to impress upon you the importance of the brand.
Style rating: ★★★★★
Suitable for: Tom Hanks, Bruce Willis, Buzz Lightyear.
Others in the range worth considering: If you want something more contemporary, the Speedmaster Professional X-33 (£1,575) is the watch Omega is touting as the timepiece that will make it to Mars (the journey there seems to have been literally interpreted since one option is a gaudy red strap). The watch itself has a circular digital centrepiece, programmable to show elapsed mission time and a countdown facility – essential for those touchdowns on the dark side of Safeways.

Name: Tag Heuer Kirium Chronograph
Price: £1,325 (Mappin & Webb, 0171-734 3801)
Description: For those who like the curvaceous, streamlined advances of Nineties auto technology, then look no further than the Tag Heuer Kirium Chronograph. The tasteful hue of its face even manages to rescue the colour burgundy from the wilderness (where it has been languishing since being identified as the preferred trouser colour of Tetley beer drinkers over a decade ago).
Water resistance: 200m
Functions: Chronograph, tachometer and an "unidirectional turning bezel" to measure lengths of dives (blind us with science, why don't you?).
Label hipness: Well, that depends on whether or not you think Damon Hill is cool (hell, at least he likes leftfield boho American rockers Cake, unlike David Coulthard, Mika Hakkinen and Michael Schumacher, who all like Phil Collins).
Style rating: ★★★★
Suitable for: Formula One fans who drive spotless Ford Pumas. And Alan Partridge.
Others in the range worth considering: The 2000 Collection and the Steve McQueen Monaco (£1,595), based on the watch the actor wore in *Le Mans*.



There's still time to get yourself some style with, *clockwise from left, watches from Breitling, Nike, Calvin Klein, Omega and Tag Heuer*

SHAUN PHILLIPS
DEPUTY EDITOR, ZM MAGAZINE

The phone number for last week's Zero Haliburton case is 0181 208 3080

IF I WIN THE LOTTERY TONIGHT...

JILL DANDO, TELEVISION PRESENTER

I WOULD do something financially practical to help those charities of which I am patron: a couple of heart-related charities, a hospice in Weston-super-Mare and a drugs project in Norwich. I cannot afford a great deal of time to help, so if I could afford something a little more practical that would be a priority. I would also make sure that people close to me were financially secure, particularly my brother and father. Once that was sorted I would thoroughly indulge myself.

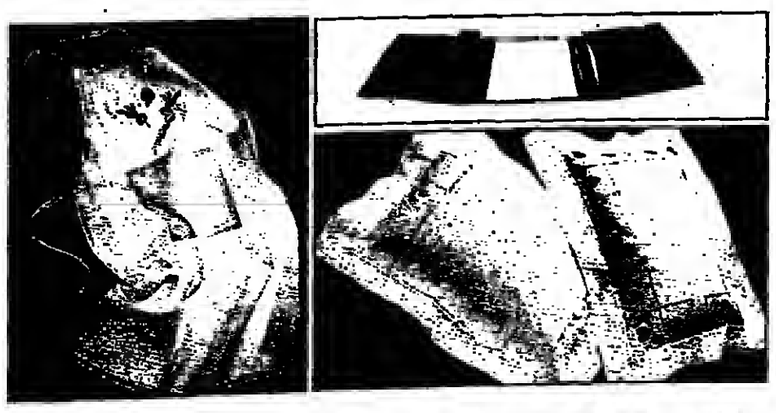
On a more flippant note I would buy the Jaguar XK8 I have always wanted as my town car. My country car would be a Range Rover, because I would have two homes, as one does. I would also indulge my passion for furniture and interior design. My London home would be a shrine to modernism. It would be a penthouse flat, with wide picture windows, a lot of light, and lots of white everywhere. I would like a river view, too, but no further east than Vauxhall Bridge.

My country house would have to be within an hour and a half's drive of London. I would furnish it with rosewood furniture – I am passionate about its rich grain and colour – building on my existing collection in my sitting room at home. It is just wonderful. I would spend my spare time trailing around antiques shops and auction houses looking for more pieces but I would still work, though not as regularly as I do now. I would like to work on individual projects, such as documentaries, with enough time to research and present my own programmes. I think I would be very bored as a lady of leisure.

I would like to take four holidays every year. One would be a real adventure, canoeing up the Amazon or a safari in Africa. The second would be something in Europe, possibly Tuscany, in the summer. Then I would take a skiing holiday in a European resort such as Lech, and my fourth break would be at home, in my country house, entertaining friends for a week. I would go to Australia as well. I have been four times for work and once on a personal trip, but I would need to spend three months there to explore properly. I have never really been to the interior, just to the coast, and I would like to go to the area around Ayers Rock and Alice Springs and drive around the far north of Queensland in the rainforest area. Through my work I have done all my daredevil pursuits and fulfilled my ambitions around the world. Now I just want a nice time.

Jill Dando presents 'Holiday' on BBC 1 every Tuesday at 8pm and the monthly programme, 'Crimewatch', also on BBC1. She was interviewed by Diona Gregory.

SHOP TALK



FOR ANYONE with more cash than time, Pemberton and Whitfield is definitely a phone number to scribble into your gilt-edged address book. A saviour of the temporally challenged shopper, or simply the downright lazy, this is the ultimate gift service, where you can choose from such covetable items, shown above, as a pair of hand-embroidered Egyptian "boudoir" pillows for £55, Italian hand-stitched leather document folders with pewter clasps, £295, and hand-embroidered Egyptian-cotton aprons with radish designs, £45.

With backgrounds in fashion and jewellery, Jane Whitfield and Sam Pemberton have set up shop together selling high-quality, often exclusive gifts through the small-but-perfectly-formed catalogue they have just launched. Gifts included in the catalogue range in price from £15 for a set of three bath-tub tea bags to £1,500 for a pair of diamond ear-rings set in 18-carat white gold. The catalogue caters for almost anyone – but the best thing about it is that all the gifts are delivered to your door in a handmade box, having first been delicately wrapped in tissue and tied with satin ribbon. And if you still can't decide what to get, they'll happily wrap up a gift voucher.

To place an order, or to request a Whitfield and Pemberton catalogue, call 0171-371 7454; or visit the website: www.pandw.demon.co.uk

STOCKING FILLER OF THE WEEK

IMPRESS YOUR guests over Christmas with a set of sweet-smelling Spice Mats from The General Trading Company (0171 730 0411). Mug mats with a difference, these soft washable pouches give off a rich cinnamon scent and come in two horticultural designs – one being a tree and the other bunches of herbs. For £11.95 for a set of four, you get to protect your table – and your reputation as a style guru.

OUT WITH THE OLD IN WITH THE NEW

CHRISTMAS JUST wouldn't be Christmas without someone getting a cardigan under their Christmas tree. If you can't bear to be different this year, then at least do your shopping with style and make sure you buy this pink crew-neck cardigan from Gap (0800 427789 for stockists). It's practical, pretty and, with the satin trim beneath the buttons, a fashionable little number and costs £34...

...on the other hand, you could be wild and treat that person to something totally different this year. *Gran Turismo*, the swish and sultry new album from Swedish popsters the Cardigans, could be just the thing. The CD costs £13.99 from HMV (enquiries 0171-432 2000) and will keep your feet a-tapping and your hips a-swaying right through into 1999.

Putting the brummm into Brum

For the first time in years the Motor Cycle Show in Birmingham packs a real punch. By **Roland Brown**

It's an indication of motorcycling's current popularity in Britain that, for the first time in living memory, there are some real surprises in store at the Motor Cycle Show, which opens at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham today. For years the major bike manufacturers have launched their new models at shows in Italy, Germany or France. And although most of next year's machines were unveiled in Munich in September, enough have been held back to put the NEC in the global spotlight as never before.

Much of the interest is centred on Yamaha's YZF-R7, an ultra-racy, four-cylinder 750cc rocketship based on this year's hugely successful 1,000cc YZF-R1.

In contrast to the mass-produced R1, the R7 is a limited-edition machine, highly tuned and fitted with special parts, that will be built in small numbers as the basis for Yamaha's challenge in next season's World Superbike Championship. A racing R7 was displayed in Munich, but the road-going bike has been held back for unveiling in Birmingham.

Two more Yamahas are making their world débuts at the NEC. The XVZ13TF Royal Star Venture is a giant tourer, powered by a 1300cc V4 engine, that is designed for long-distance comfort and incorporates luggage, stereo and cruise control. Like the XVS1100 Drag Star, launched in Munich, the XV1600 Wild Star, on view for the first time this week, is a big V-twin cruiser whose style is shamelessly borrowed from Harley-Davidson – whose recent Dyna Super Glide Sport and other Twin Cam 88 powered models will be at the NEC for the first time.

Yamaha also has the new YZF-R6, a sporty 600cc four whose 120bhp output and weight of 169kg make it the most powerful and lightest in the class. At about £6,000 the R6 will cost well under half as much as the R7, and will provide plenty of high-revving thrills. Its closest rival next year will be the latest version of Honda's CBR600F, the popular middleweight that is comprehensively uprated this year with a new 108bhp engine and its first aluminium frame.

Honda's big NEC news is the launch of the CBR900RR FireBlade Evolution, an exotic, ultra-powerful version of the familiar four-cylinder hyperbike.

The Evolution has been developed by Honda UK in conjunction with Hertfordshire tuning firm RS Performance, and will be built in limited numbers next year for sale at £18,000. With a 165bhp power output and a chassis uprated with upmarket parts including a single-sided swingarm, the Evolution is set to outperform even Yamaha's R1.

Even so, the Evolution won't be the fastest superbike at the NEC. Suzuki's new GSX1300R Hayabusa, whose 1,298cc, 16-valve engine produces a massive 173bhp, has been produced to snatch the World's Fastest Motorcycle title from Honda's Super Blackbird. Aided by aerodynamically efficient but ugly bodywork, the Hayabusa could have a top speed of over 180mph.

Suzuki also has a brace of new V-twin middleweights, the naked SV650 and half-faired SV650S, which promise lively performance at an attractive price. Kawasaki's main new models are V-twins of a very different type. The VN1500 and VN800 Drifters are cruisers whose old-fashioned styling, incorporating enormous mudguards, mimics American-built Indians of the Fifties.

Although Kawasaki also has a modern budget 750cc four called the ZR-7, its other new model is the bizarre W650, a Sixties style parallel twin.

In contrast Britain's Triumph, back from the grave since its Sixties heyday, has a new bike that is bang up to date. The Sprint ST is a new generation sports-tourer that combines a 108bhp, 955cc three-cylinder engine with Triumph's first twin-spar aluminium frame. And the Leicestershire firm also has a new version of its dual-purpose Tiger model, whose lighter, lower chassis holds an 885cc triple engine producing 86bhp.

BMW has one of the biggest bikes at the Show, in the rounded shape of the K1200LT luxury tourer. Beneath the all-enclosing plastic, the bike billed as the two-wheeled 7 Series is powered by a 98bhp four-cylinder engine.

Equally important is its equipment list: adjustable screen and passenger seat plus a radio are standard; CD changer, cruise control and heated seat are optional extras.

The show's main Italian interest comes from Ducati, whose plethora of new models includes the uprated 996 sportster; the 916cc, eight-valve ST4 sports-tourer; and the 750SS, a smaller-engined version of this year's 900SS. Disappointingly the Ducati that stole the headlines in Munich, the stunning prototype MH900e Hailwood Evoluzione, is not at the NEC – but that doesn't prevent this being the biggest and best bike show for years.

The Motor Cycle Show, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, 14 to 22 November, 10am-6pm; admission: adults £12, under-16s and OAPs £5, under-10s free when accompanied by adult

The stylish Suzuki GSX1300R Hayabusa, designed to be the world's fastest motorcycle *Roland Brown*

Awful car, if you like ventilation

GAVIN GREEN

I should give up the witch hunt and come clean. It's fantastic, brilliant, amazing...

FANTASTIC! BRILLIANT! Amazing! The greatest single leap forward since the guys at Apple got sick of typing letters and invented the personal computer. (I just made up the last eulogy.) Such are the reactions from level-headed journalists reviewing a new family Ford. Even Jeremy Clarkson loved it.

How could a car with such a humble background – it's still a Ford after all – harvest such tributes? I've been driving a Focus for the past two weeks and was determined to find fault.

I did 1,000 miles in the first week and used it for city commuting in week two. I have had three kids in the back, filled the boot with bags and driven it on tracks, motorways and French secondaries. I have even had a Ford engineer alongside to take the flak.

Many journalists have said they can find no fault with the Ford. I am pleased to be able to report that I can. Its ventilation sucks (or, to be more accurate, it fails to blow out enough fresh air). Many modern cars, sculpted to cleave the air cleanly rather than ram air into the cabin, suffer similarly, but the Focus seems worse than most.

The road noise, on some motorways, is worse than I'd expected. You can bear quite a thrum on some surfaces. And the ride is firm. The Focus is biased to sharp handling more than soft riding although there's actually nothing uncomfortable about the way the Focus moves over broken tarmac.

Alex Moulton, designer of the Mini's rubber suspension and now maker of collapsible bicycles, reckons that the windscreen pillar is too steeply raked, which makes access difficult for older people. Besides that, he rather liked it.

The boot is smaller than the outgoing Escort's but still seems big enough, and the liftover height of the boot is also higher than normal. "That was a styling decision," said the Ford man. "We wanted the rear bumper to be quite high."

The Star Wars-style dash is a bit strange. Besides, a Golf's dashboard, as well as looking classier, is made from sterner stuff. A Golf's cabin still feels more upmarket, never mind that the VW is inferior in just about every other way.

That's the extraordinary thing about the Focus. It has not only muscled its way to the front of the class but, in most important areas, it has done so with such conviction that everything else feels rather second-rate. It's even good to drive around town in traffic, thanks to its excellent pedal actions and steering. In sharp contrast, the new Vauxhall Astra has an appallingly balky gearbox, while the new Peugeot 206 has pedals that are badly angled and impossible for big shoes.

There I go, flattering the Focus. Maybe I should just give up the witch hunt and come clean. It is fantastic, brilliant, quite amazing.

MY WORST CAR
MATTHEW PARRIS'S MORRIS OXFORD

And then the axle dropped off

MY WORST car was my first car, which I fell in love with. Like all great love affairs, it was bound to be a painful experience and end in tears.

The car in question was a 1958 Morris Oxford which my father bought for my 17th birthday. The idea was to teach me as much about motor mechanics as possible, and boy did it do that. At the time, I was living in Swaziland and it would regularly let the terrain get the better of it. On one occasion, the rear axle dropped off.

It was the U-bolts which broke, proving how well I got to know all the oily bits on that car. Other times, it was the climate, rather than the terrain, which defeated the old Oxford – it would overheat so badly that the radiator needed to be replaced more than once. Yet despite all the problems, I loved it. It was large, comfortable and gave me my freedom.

Love and hate – a Morris Oxford

In fact, I was so convinced it would look after me, that when I left to go to England, I decided to drive. Unfortunately, I gave up in Mombasa as it proved too unreliable. But that wasn't the last I saw of the Oxford.

In England, I decided to make a go of it again, so had the Oxford shipped in. Not a wise decision as it turned out. By then I was working at the Foreign Office and it was costing me £500 a year to keep it roadworthy, a small fortune back then. The final straw was the gearbox which broke and needed replacing. Unfortunately, I could no longer afford the repairs and had to abandon it in Andover.

Even today, I still feel terribly guilty about what I did. I couldn't face even seeing another Oxford, let alone buying one. In fact, the worst thing is that when I go to India I'm surrounded by the Ambassador. If you didn't know, that is their national vehicle and exactly the same as the Morris Oxford, my first, worst, but most lovable car.

Matthew Parris's book, 'The Great Unfrocked – Two Thousand Years of Church Scandal', is out (Robson Books, £17.95). He was talking to James Ruppert

A dampener on any deal

A flooded house is a nightmare, especially if you are about to sell – or buy – it. By Penny Jackson

It is bad enough clearing up the mess left by receding flood waters, but if a house is just about to change hands, matters are a great deal worse. Some of those who are still drying out their homes may well have a buyer to keep sweet on top of all their other problems.

The owner of a little terrace cottage in the Shrewsbury area, which was badly affected by the recent floods, had to deal with a foot of water inside his house, and an unhappy purchaser. Bad luck saw the river Severn break its banks between exchange of contracts and completion. Roger Whittles, who is on the Shropshire branch committee of the National Association of Estate Agents, says the owner is to all intents and purposes being held over a barrel. "He has taken a reduction of about 5 per cent to keep the sale on course, otherwise the buyer would have been lost altogether. Fortunately, everybody was properly insured."

Legally, the purchaser becomes responsible for a building on exchange of contracts and will insure it from that date, although solicitors often agree that the responsibility should remain with the vendor. Certainly, solicitors and estate agents would be unlikely to advise a vendor to cancel their insurance in case the purchaser turned out, as one agent said, to be a man of straw.

It is quite usual for a property to be covered twice during the period before completion. In common law, though, if a house should suffer a disaster, the buyer is liable. While this may seem a far-fetched scenario, for Ronald and Juliet Plant it became a reality a few years ago when one of the most treasured features of the small estate in Cornwall they had agreed to buy collapsed in hurricane-force winds.

The 18th-century farmhouse in Stoke Climsland has two spectacular walled gardens of nearly an acre each. "On the day after we exchanged contracts, we received the news that a large tree had brought down some 150ft of the massive walls. Nothing prepared us for that," says Ronald Plant. "Without really thinking about it too much, I had fortunately asked my surveyor what sort of cover we would need. Emotionally, we didn't really feel that we had bought the property, or that we would really need to claim on the insurance. The vendor was very worried that the sale would be aborted and we both consulted our insurers. The bill for repair was calculated to be in the region of £17,000." To their enormous relief, the Plants' insurers agreed to meet the costs. "The walls were listed and it couldn't be rebuilt in any old fashion," explains Ronald Plant

Ronald and Juliet Plant with their restored wall, destroyed by a falling tree *Marc Hill/Apex*

The loss of the walled gardens to a historic property of this kind would have been irreparable. The Plants, who have gradually restored the estate and are soon to put it on the market, say that it would not be the same without the walls, which now look as they did in their best days.

Around her home along the river Severn, Vikki Heath is pinning her hopes on a new wall. She and her husband have just returned to their 300-year-old cottage after 10 days in a hotel while the flood subsided. "The water was predicted to come but it was an absolute nightmare waiting for it to happen. We have a free-standing kitchen and tiled floors so we could rescue most of our things. It does make you think hard about selling. But it is very beautiful here and we wouldn't want to live anywhere else. Once everything is back to normal, you forget. We are going to build a wall now seeing that the river is only two fields away from the house."

Anyone who can throw a ball from their house into the river has a pretty good chance of being flooded, says Nick Tart, who runs estate agencies in Bridgnorth and Ironbridge. "But it is a price people are prepared to pay to live in such lovely places. One current purchaser was very anxious about floods, but although water did eventually come into the house, he wasn't deterred. Even in areas where ground movement and risk of flooding make it impossible to get mortgages or insurance, there are always people who will buy there because they are such idyllic spots."

In Shrewsbury, Jonathan Lovegrove-Fielden of Balfour Burd & Benson has seen acres of his clients' farmland, rather than homes, disappear under water. Insurance companies, he finds, have become much sharper in recent years.

"Clients can get as much as 30 per cent discount on their properties if they are confident about cutting out flood cover," he says. "But a bigger risk during the period between exchange and completion is from burst pipes. If a property is empty it can be days before the problem is found and the damage done to a house is far greater than from flood water."

But in the minds of purchasers, the drama of floods seems far more of a peril than domestic negligence. In Sussex, even though the river Lavant flooded a few years ago for the only time this century, buyers constantly refer to it.

A listed cottage in the village of Singleton, on the market with Henry Adams and Partners, was flooded then, which has undoubtedly put off a few purchasers, says Richard Williscroft. A new environmental awareness means that in some areas, new houses are being built on higher ground than five years ago. But bad weather is not always such a sales disaster. "Until Selsea was struck by a freak tornado, nobody much had heard of it. Now its notoriety has put it firmly on the map," adds Williscroft.

STEPPING STONES

ONE FAMILY'S PROPERTY STORY

PENNY DRAPER has bought three properties since 1982. She now lives in a four-bedroom house with her husband and son in Bexleyheath, Kent

Bexleyheath seems to hold a special charm for Penny – all her purchases have been within a mile of each other.

Buying their first home was inevitable: "Everyone was doing it so we went with the flow, we didn't dither." This first house was a two-up, two-down cottage which cost £42,000: "We chose it because it was Victorian. It was nice, but freezing and infested with cockroaches."

The busy road made parking problematic but Penny devised an ingenious solution: "We bought a washing machine from the shop next door. They were so grateful they let us park in their private road."

After five years the favour wore thin and a growing son made their home feel small. The Drapers sold for £57,000 and "decamped", literally down the road, to a new town house, which cost £76,000. The extra space allowed Penny's husband the luxury of his own study. "He likes to while away the time on the computer and listen to Radio 4. A sad case," says Penny, who in turn found relative tranquillity "in the company of a teenager and deranged canine".

Ten years on, tranquillity became even more elusive: "People from the pub up the road would urinate and throw beer bottles in our garden." Did the Drapers devise another ingenious solution? "That's when my husband turned vigilante," says Penny. "Trying to persuade him not to lie camouflaged in the front garden on a Friday night was a weekly ritual."

In 1997, unable to stamp out crime, the Drapers sold for £85,000 and bought another new property, again in beloved Bexleyheath, but this time a four-bedroom, detached house for £171,000, which they spotted one night while out walking the dog. Their faithful pet misses the regular supply of chicken bones he enjoyed in his last garden, but otherwise the family are happily settled and eagerly awaiting the completion of their conservatory: "It suits us here. It lacks the social aspirations of Blackheath and Greenwich, and it's suburban and boring, but we love it."

Marni Humble, Halifax's area manager, has herself bought three properties in Bexleyheath and endorses Penny Draper's passion for the place: "I've never fallen foul of any price drops It sounds sad but I can't imagine living anywhere else either."

GINETTA VEDRICKAS

Penny Draper at her home in Bexleyheath

THOSE MOVES IN BRIEF

1982 – bought two-up, two-down for £42,000, sold for £57,000.
1987 – bought three-bed town house for £76,000, sold for £85,000.
1997 – bought four-bed detached house for £171,000, now worth £200,000.

If you would like your moves to be featured in this space, write to: Nic Cicutti, Stepping Stones, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL – £100 will be awarded for the best story.

Don't come a cropper on the Costa Lotta

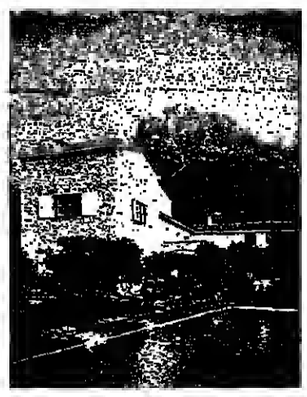
BLAME MIKHAIL Gorbachev if house prices in Spain are too high for your liking. Helen Parker was an estate agent in Mallorca for several years shortly after the Berlin Wall came down. "When East and West Germany merged, some worried, wealthy Germans bought property in Spain, which they viewed as a safe haven. The result was rapid inflation."

In Ms Parker's experience, the stereotype of British expats in Spain – golfers and retirees – needs updating to include middle-aged businessmen successful enough to retire early. Another group is even younger: "Mallorca has a massive community of foreigners who work as professional crews on the private yachts of the super-rich, and they buy properties in rural Mallorca and Barcelona."

Ms Parker advises would-be buyers to "make sure your agent is reputable, shop around for a good lawyer or *gestor* [a legal adviser, pronounced "hestor"] and get advice from expat Britons. "Make sure you get the vendor's receipts, because the current owner of the property is responsible for unpaid taxes and bills."

Recently a British couple lost their holiday home because the official register had not been amended to reflect the new ownership. Their vendor was still recorded as the owner. He owed huge sums, and the court sold the house for a pittance of its true value without informing the owners; the house has a new owner who can't be budged. Case closed.

Before you sign the *escritura* on the dotted line, make sure you know your *notario* from your *abogado* and familiarise yourself with the idiosyncrasies of Spanish law.



Spanish house prices are high

Any professional who stops you falling into the notorious *todos los gastos* trap will repay his fee. British buyers are often advised to underdeclare the purchase price on the title deed, but "this practice is illegal, and people who lie in this way incur larger capital gains-tax liabilities later".

In the £40,000 to £80,000 range, Graham Baigent of *World of Property* recommends "northern Costa Blanca around Moraira or inland, but you might need closer to £80,000 for a reasonably small villa. Further south, Torrevieja offers excellent value."

World of Property contains many advertisements for developers, agents and advisers for all of Spain, and the first copy of the magazine is free.

In Mallorca, the third phase of the 136-unit Ses Oliveres is under way on the Bendinat Estate near Palma. Prices start at £185,000 for apartments and £280,000 for townhouses. Knight Frank has homes on Marbella, Mallorca and Ibiza ranging from £880,000 top £7m. Hampton's International has affiliates in Spain and handles villas with prices starting at £85,000 and rising to £1m. Pricey Spanish properties are also represented by Sotheby's International Property.

Hamptons International 0171-493 8787; Knight Frank 0171-629 8171; Ses Oliveres (00-34-971) 676024; Sotheby's International 0171-293 6443; 'World of Property' 01323 726040

ROBERT LIEBMAN

HOT SPOT
ACTON, WEST LONDON

Poets should apply to buy now

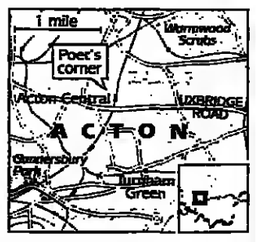
Acton wasn't always a bedroom community for people whose first, second and third choices were Chiswick, Ealing and Hammersmith. In the 1800s and lasting into the present century, Acton was convenient for workers in various industries which, thanks to local wells, came to include more than 200 hand laundries. Then, it was known as Soapsuds Island.

Now, "Acton is a place you drive through unless you have business here," says Nicola Liddiard, manager at estate agent Rolfe East. "It's a stepping stone. Young couples sell flats in Ealing and Chiswick, buy in Acton, then when they have children move back to Ealing or Chiswick because of the schools."

But for certain groups the schools *here* are the lure, such as the King Fahad Academy on Bromyard Avenue, the Japanese school on Creffield Road, the Greek Embassy School on Pierrepoint Road, and the Barbara Speake Stage School on East Acton Lane.

Ms Liddiard recommends leafy Acton Town and Poets' Corner, and the often-overlooked but money-making homes around the South Acton Estate. The Goldsmiths Almshouses on East Churchfield are particularly picturesque.

Enjoying a degree of credibility unusual for an estate agent, Ian Stone of Bushells has put his money where his mouth is in recommending Acton; he recently bought a house in Poets' Corner. "It has easy access to central London and to lovely restaurants in Chiswick, and the council is regenerating the High Street."



Road pedestrianisation and tree planting are included in the Conservation Area Partnership involving Ealing Council, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Grants are available to repair and renovate buildings of historical and architectural interest, including shopfronts.

When Tony Carey lived in Acton in the Seventies, "I could buy a house in Acton instead of a flat elsewhere." Now a property developer whose High Street flats, Coopers Gate, are nearing completion, he is attracted to the area for the same reason: "Acton represents good value, so we could afford to buy and build and offer excellent value. Our flats would cost 30 per cent more in Chiswick, Shepherd's Bush or Ealing."

Prices are currently stable, but the long-term future looks bullish. Mr Stone says that, until the recent slowdown, Acton enjoyed above-average price increases of approximately 25 per cent over the previous 18 months.

The stigmata typifying gentrification – growing numbers of German automobiles, a Korean restaurant at Cooper's Gate – are beginning to appear. Critical mass will eventually be reached, and then buyers will begin to choose Acton for itself alone and not its prestigious neighbours.

ROBERT LIEBMAN

24-carat Acton... one of the Goldsmiths Almshouses *Emma Boam*

THE LOW-DOWN

Prices: House sizes and styles vary enormously. In Poets' Corner, £350,000 buys three or six bedrooms. Two-bedroom converted flats range from £100,000 to £150,000. At Cooper's Gate, £99,950 buys one bedroom and £132,950 gets two. Underground parking and CCTV are included with every flat.

Transport: Buses on Uxbridge Road link Acton to Ealing and Shepherd's Bush, and North Acton (Central Line) and Acton Town stations (District) are on the edges of Acton. Acton Central is on the North London Line, a semi-circular wonder between Richmond and Woolwich.

Council Tax: Band A on £429 and Band H on £1,286 put Ealing at the low end for London council tax.

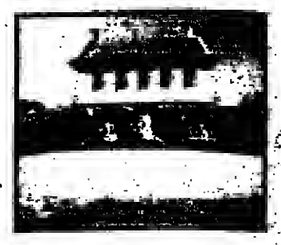
Poets' Corner: Shakespeare, Milton, Chaucer, Cowper and Goldsmith roads are in Poets' Corner, the latter referring not to Oliver but to the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths

Shopping: "Lousy," is Ms Liddiard's verdict. Safeway and Homebase are the biggest, and the only, draws.

Outdoors: Acton contains many small parks and recreation grounds and is equidistant between Gunnershury Park and Wormwood Scrubs. Golf, tennis, swimming and bowls are handy.

Estate agents: Bushells, 0181-993 6767; Rolfe East 0181-993 7755; Cooper's Gate 0181 896 9828.

THREE TO VIEW:
FOR BIG SPENDERS



OFFERS over £1m will put you in with a chance to buy the Old Rectory at Doynton, near Bath in Gloucestershire, a Grade II-listed house priced at considerably more than the average vicar could afford. But two reverends have lived in the house, including the 25-year old Rector Louis Balfour-Clutterbuck in 1847. The Church sold the three-reception, six-bedroom house in 1939.

The current owners have completely renovated the Georgian house, standing in three acres of gardens and grounds, including walled garden, paddocks and outbuildings which have been converted into three offices. Details from Knight Frank (01285 679771).

NUMBER 46 Upper Mall, on the banks of the Thames, a quarter of a mile up-river from Hammersmith Bridge, will also set a buyer back £1m-plus. The four-storey, four-bedroom Victorian house has two reception rooms, including a first-floor drawing room, and two kitchens, because it is currently laid out to provide a separate one-bedroom apartment on the ground floor. As it needs some modernisation and the garden is small, the price reflects the views from all the main rooms – and a good-size garage under the house – rather than any ritzy decor. Details from Hamptons (0181 940 0070).

YOU GET more space for your million in Overton, Hampshire. Here it will buy Turrill House, a period five-bedroom house with an interconnecting three-bedroom cottage. The River Test is one of its boundaries – although it doesn't have fishing rights – and it comes with more than five acres of gardens. Just over a mile from the railway station (London is 55 miles away), it has been decorated inside and out, and has a kitchen with oak units and two-oven Aga, a 28ft drawing room, study, breakfast room and cellar. The gardens include a vegetable garden, tennis court and spring-fed lakes. Details from Hill & Morrison (01256 702892).

ROSALIND RUSSELL